THE

Theory *of* Chriſtianity,

IN TWELVE

PLAIN DISCOURSES

ON THE

Articles of the Chriſtian Faith:

To which is added,

By way of Appendix *to* ART. IX.

An ESSAY towards a more free and natural Explication of *The Holy Catholick Church; the Communion of Saints.*

By JAMES CARRINGTON, M. A. Prebendary of *Exeter*, Rector of *Clayworth*, in *Nottinghamſhire*, and Chaplain to the Right Reverend the Lord Biſhop of *Exeter*.

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M.DCC.XLVIII.

THE

Theory of Christianity;

IN TWELVE

PLAIN DISCOURSES



To the Right Reverend

GEORGE,

Lord Bishop of

EXETER.

My Lord,



WERE I deſtitute of any other Excuſe for this Addreſs, I ſhould depend upon the Subject of the Sheets which it is intended to introduce, as I am ſenſible that whatever has a Tendency to promote a Cauſe which you have always had ſo much at Heart, cannot fail of ſome Degree of Acceptance with your Lordſhip. By this Means alſo I may be

fortunate

fortunate enough (excuſe the Artifice) to engage a more favourable Reception in the World than I might otherwiſe meet with, as there are few I ſuppoſe who will not be of Opinion, that a Work which has the Honour of ſuch a Sanction cannot be without ſome Share of Merit: Whether indeed theſe Eſſays may pretend to any other than what they derive from a truly honeſt Intention, is not mine to determine.

But there are, My LORD, excluſive of theſe, very many Conſiderations, which ſeem not only to authoriſe, but in ſome Meaſure even to demand this Addreſs; and which evidently convert what might otherwiſe appear an Act of Preſumption and Impertinence, into an abſolute and indiſpenſable Duty. As it is ſolely to your Lordſhip (under Providence) that I am indebted for that happy Exemption from the Cares and Anxieties of a *buſy* Life, and for every Thing elſe indeed which has enabled me to appear in this publick Character, your Lordſhip has undoubtedly a moſt equitable

equitable Right to be ſatisfied in what Manner that Leiſure has been employed, and the Reſult of it may be with great Propriety conſider'd as a Tribute due to your Lordſhip by a moſt juſt and rational Claim. As ſuch then, I beg your Lordſhip to receive theſe Eſſays, and (as I am afraid they will ſtand but in too much need of it) to allow them a Share in that Indulgence which their thankful Parent has ſo often experienced.

To purſue this Addreſs in the uſual Style of Dedications (though with the happieſt Foundation for it that I could wiſh) were, I am ſatisfied, the ſureſt Way of incurring your Diſpleaſure; for which Reaſon I ſhall take no other Notice even of thoſe many and ſingular Obligations, in which I ſtand indebted to your Lordſhip, than to aſſure you, that the lively and grateful Senſe which I have always had of them ſhall not die but with myſelf. This indeed, with my ſincereſt and moſt fervent Prayers for your Lordſhip's Welfare, is all I have to offer in Return for them: And

on

on these you may ever depend, as the constant and chearful Tribute of,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obliged,

and most obedient Servant,

Kew, October 1, 1748.

J. CARRINGTON.

THE

PREFACE.

AS the Number of Volumes already extant on this Subject does not ſeem to ſtand in much need of an Augmentation, it will probably be expected that I ſhould uſher this into the World with ſome Kind of Apology. I hope the following Conſiderations will be accepted as ſuch. In the Circle of my Acquaintance I have met with too many, who, how well ſoever vers'd in other Parts of Literature, have yet appeared groſsly deficient in this: And in the Courſe of my reading I have obſerved, that moſt of our Expoſitions (tho' many of them excellent in their Kind) are penn'd in a Style and Manner very unſuitable to the generality of Readers; and ſuch as I am ſenſible are too apt to affright all but thoſe few, whoſe peculiar Genius leads them, or whoſe particular Station in Life obliges them to the Purſuit of this Kind of Study.

To remove this Stumbling-Block, by endeavouring to convey the Knowledge of theſe important though neglected Truths in a more conciſe, eaſy and familiar Manner, is the ſole View of the following Eſſays. And thus far I am ſure I am right; and may, without riſquing the Charge of Inſolence and Vanity, claim ſome Share of Merit. In other Reſpects I will not be ſo poſitive: I wiſh I could anſwer, even to my ſelf, as well

well for every Thing else as for the Intention. I assure the Reader I had been better pleased to have seen this Plan executed by any other Hand than by my own; And it was not till after many fruitless Wishes on that Head that I prevailed with my self to make the Attempt. However, as I have done it, I think it necessary to beg as candid and favourable a Reception, as may be consistent with my Reader's Honesty and Judgement.

I promise him my best Prayers and Wishes shall attend him thro' the Whole; and if any Thing he meets with here shall happen to make him a wiser or a better Man than he was before, he will have given me all the Satisfaction I desire; a Vanity I would not wish to be proof against; and an Applause, which will sound sweeter in my Ears than the highest Elogy Fame could possiby give me on any other Occasion. For whatever else regards these Essays, as they are now no longer mine, I leave them to answer for themselves.

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ARTICLE I.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth.

ARTICLE I.

I believe in God the Father
Almighty, Maker of Heaven
ven and Earth.

ARTICLE I.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth.

1 Cor. viii. Former Part of Ver. 6.

——*To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all Things.*

ART. I.

THIS Aſſertion of the Apoſtle exhibits to us an Article of the *Chriſtian* Faith, which as it is firſt in Order, as we find them collected in that ſhort Summary, which goes under the Name of *Apoſtles Creed*, ſo is it alſo in Eſſence and Virtue.

It ſtands here as contra-diſtinguiſh'd from Paganiſm; for *although there be* (ſays he) *who are called Gods* (by the Nations) *whether in Heaven or in Earth, as there be Gods many, and Lords many; yet to us* (who profeſs the Religion inſtituted by *Jeſus Chriſt*) *there is but* ONE *God, the Father, of whom are all Things.*[a]

Agreeable to this, we begin the Profeſſion of our Faith thus, *I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth*; which Article ſhall be the Subject of the preſent Diſcourſe.

But before I enter upon the Subſtance of the Article itſelf, it will be neceſſary to animadvert a little on the Words *I believe*, which have ſo much Relation to the whole Creed in general.

[a] 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6.

ART. I. For although the Words be mentioned no more than twice throughout the Creed, yet are they underſtood in ſeveral Parts of it, and virtually prefixed not only to every diſtinct Article, but when an Article conſiſts of ſeveral Portions, to each alſo of thoſe Portions. Thus, as we ſay we *believe* in God, we ſay alſo in Effect we *believe* in *Jeſus Chriſt*; we *believe* that *Jeſus Chriſt* is the only Son of God; we *believe* that he is our Lord; we *believe* that he was conceived by the *Holy Ghoſt*; and ſo on: So that the Words *I believe* are virtually contained in the Creed at leaſt not ſeldomer than four and twenty Times.

TO BELIEVE is to aſſent to the Truth of any Propoſition, either on the Authority of the Aſſertor, or on the Probability of the Thing itſelf: It is thus at leaſt that we believe of *Faith*; for very many Things, which we believe, we believe not of *Faith*, but of evident *Knowledge*. Again, *Faith* is divided into *Human* and *Divine*; the former is an Aſſent to any Propoſition on the Teſtimony of Man; the latter on the Teſtimony of God, founded upon Divine Authority: And this it is, which becomes neceſſary in the Caſe before us; for *Fleſh and Blood hath not revealed*[b] unto us thoſe Truths, to which we give our ſolemn Aſſent in the Creed; *neither received we it of Man; neither were we taught it, but by the Revelation of* Jeſus Chriſt.[c] Suffice it then to ſay once for all, that to ſay *I believe* amounts here to thus much—I do really and firmly aſſent to the Truth of ſuch and ſuch Propoſitions, through a full Reliance on the Veracity of God, and his Teſtimony delivered to us in the Holy Scriptures.

The firſt Thing then to which we give this ſolemn

[b] *Matt.* xvi. 17. [c] *Galat.* i. 12.

lemn and formal Aſſent is, THAT THERE IS A GOD; by which Term we underſtand one eternal, independent, ſelf-exiſtent Being, who was without Beginning, and will be without End; from whom proceed all things: Himſelf unform'd, uncreated, unproduced. ART. I.

To enter on a Courſe of Arguments in Proof of this firſt Propoſition, were to undertake an endleſs, and indeed unneceſſary Task; Reaſon and Nature are both of them Evidences in this Behalf, which it is impoſſible to ſilence; nor ſhall I refer you at preſent to any of thoſe numerous Tracts, the Buſineſs of which it is to evince, and illuſtrate this great and ſolemn Truth: Give me Leave however to remind you of one, which every Man has always at hand, and in which he may find it impreſs'd in the ſtrongeſt and moſt affecting Characters: This is that great and noble Volume, penn'd by God himſelf; the extenſive Book of *Nature*, wherein *his inviſible Properties, even his eternal Power and Godhead are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the Things which are made.* [d] In ſhort, let a Man conſult his Senſes, which it is in the Power of every one to do; let him liſten to them, and they will all combine to declare it: the Light proclaims it to the Eye; Thunder to the Ear; Heat and Cold ſpeak to the Touch; Food to the Palate, and Odours to the Noſtril; in a Word, every thing we ſee, hear, feel, taſte, or ſmell, is full of God. [e]

If we turn our Eyes upwards, behold an endleſs Circle of Beauties: Myriads of ſhining Orbs rolling on in an orderly and undiſturbed Courſe; and as they move, like the various Inſtruments in a Concert, each warbling out its Part in the general Doxology: *There is neither Speech nor Language*

[d] Rom. i. 20. [e] Jupiter eſt quodcunque vides; Jovis omnia plena.

ART. I. *amongſt them*, yet are their Voices inceſſantly employed; and ſo loudly do they ſing their great Creator, that *their Sound goeth out into all Lands, and their Words reach even the Ends of the world.*[f]

Return we to the Earth, and in our Paſſage take a View of all the Wonders, which intervene; *Fire*, and *Hail*, *Snow*, and *Vapours*, *Wind*, and *Storm*, all waiting in the outer Courts of Heaven, in Readineſs to *fulfil his Word:*[g] Obſerve them ſtill as Bleſſings, or as Judgments, by an unerring Rule deſcending on the Earth, obedient to that Voice, which *ſaith to the Snow, Be thou on the Earth; likewiſe to the ſmall Rain, and to the great Rain of his Strength*;[h] by which they are diſpatched on their reſpective Errands, *whether for Correction, or for his Land, or for Mercy.*[i]

For the Earth, behold her covered with an endleſs Variety of Herbs, Fruits and Flowers; obſerve the Birth and Progreſs of the *vegetable* World; follow the riſing and deſcending Sap, and mark the opening Leaf and Bud; aſk who cloathed the Lilly in his gaudy Coat, a Dreſs the Splendor of *Solomon* could not equal; behold a beautiful Diſplay of every thing upon her extenſive Surface, and ſtill each Individual appropriate to its Uſe; *Graſs for the Cattle, and green Herb for the Service of Man*;[k] Corn for the Support, and Grapes and Olives for the Solace of his Life.

Ranſack her Bowels, and obſerve the ſame amazing Harmony and Order run through the darkeſt and moſt retired Caverns; or view, and wonder at the Conſtruction of this ponderous Maſs, ſelf-pois'd in Air, *founded on the Seas, and prepared on the Floods.*[l]

Conſider

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[f] Pſalm xix. [g] Pſalm cxlviii. 8. [h] Job, xxxvii. 6.
[i] Job, xxxvii. 13. [k] Pſ. civ. 14, &c. [l] Pſ. xxiv. 2.

ART. I.

Conſider next the *animal* World: *Aſk now the Beaſts, and they ſhall teach thee, or the Fowls of the Air, and they ſhall tell thee; or ſpeak to the Earth, and it ſhall teach thee, and the Fiſhes of the Sea ſhall declare unto thee.*[m]

Behold how *fearfully and wonderfully* thyſelf art *made*;[n] trace Life through all her ſecret Springs, follow the circulating Blood along thy Veins, and liſten to thy throbbing Heart; watch the Starts and Sallies of the Imagination, and meditate with Wonder on the Operations of the Soul; then ſay, Why are all theſe Things thus? Whence do they proceed?——Alas! we know too well whence they do not proceed; a Thouſand melancholy Proofs of human Inability to effect the leaſt Article of all this, a very few Minutes will ſupply us with; to *Chance*, *Neceſſity*, or *jarring Atoms*, is a Reſource unworthy any but the weak and wicked Wretch, who would perſuade himſelf into the Belief of ſuch a Syſtem as is moſt agreeable to his own Intereſts. Hence then muſt we naturally refer to one only, one firſt, and greateſt Cauſe; and that Cauſe is God, *in whom* and through whom *all Things do live, move, and have their Being.*[o]

But it is not only neceſſary that we believe a God, but alſo that we believe rightly of him; that we entertain reverent and worthy Conceptions of him, aſcribing to him, and to him alone, certain Powers, and Prerogatives incommunicable to, and incompatible with every other Nature, which therefore we call the *Divine Attributes:* Such are, for Inſtance, *Omniſcience*, or a perfect Knowledge of whatſoever is tranſacted through the vaſt Expanſe of Heaven and Earth; even in the moſt ſe-

[m] Job, xii. 7, 8. [n] Pſalm cxxxix. 14. [o] Acts, xvii. 28.

ART. I. cret and retired Receſſes of Man's Heart.[p] *Omnipotence*, or an unlimited Power of effecting every thing, according to his own good Pleaſure. *Omnipreſence*, or an uncircumſcribed Nature (not confined, or incloſed within any Bounds) whereby he is really, and actually preſent at one and the ſame Time in every Part of the Univerſe. *Eternity*, and *Infinity*; that he was without Beginning, and will be without End, *i. e.* that there never was a Time, when God did not exiſt in the ſame Manner he now does, nor ever will be a Time, when he ſhall ceaſe to be. *Immutability*, or Unchangeableneſs, *i. e.* that he always was, and always will be in every reſpect the ſame. Laſtly, to him alſo belongs in the ſtricteſt Senſe *Unity*, or *Oneneſs* (if it may be ſo called); we muſt believe that *he is God*, and that *there is not*, nor indeed can be *any beſide him*; and that in a Word his Nature is indiviſible, incommunicable and inimitable.

Furthermore, we are to aſcribe to him in the higheſt and moſt perfect Degree imaginable what Divines call the *moral* Attributes, or thoſe Virtues, and Qualifications, which we find partially and imperfectly reſident in Man. We muſt believe him, for Inſtance, to be infinitely wiſe, infinitely juſt, good, tender, merciful, and benevolent; every of theſe

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[p] *See* Iſaiah, lxvi. 18. Ezek. xi. 5. Pſalm xliv. 21. xciv. 11, *&c.* Of this alſo the very Heathens were conſcious, and univerſally confeſs it—"Let no one think himſelf ſafe there-"fore (ſaith *Seneca*) if he conceal but his Vices from human "Eyes; for we live in the continual Preſence of one who "knows all Things; we are expoſed to the conſtant View "of God." *Seneca* apud *Lactant.* Lib. vi. Again, "Nothing "is hid from God; he reſides in our very Souls, mixes him-"ſelf with our Thoughts, and indeed is never abſent from "them." *Idem Epiſt.* 83.—*Thales* being aſked whether Man's Actions could deceive the Gods, readily replied, "No nor "their Thoughts neither." *Valer. Maxim.* lib. vii. c. 2.

theſe Apprehenſions muſt be the inſeparable Concomitant of our Belief in God, otherwiſe we fall very ſhort of the Mark, and had as good never to profeſs ſuch a Belief; ſince the Attributes of God are ſo interwoven, that we cannot withdraw one of them, without its being followed by the Ruin of the whole Fabrick. ART. I.

But beſides theſe, there is another Character, by which God ſtands particularly diſtinguiſhed in the Creed, which is that of *Father*; in what Senſe, and for what Reaſons, I proceed to conſider.

In the firſt Place, God has undoubtedly a moſt equitable Right to this Appellation, as being the firſt Fountain, from which we derive our Being, as well as all the Contingencies of it. *Creation* indeed ſeems to imply a better Right than *Generation*, thoſe we call our Fathers being no other than as ſecond Cauſes, or Inſtruments in the Hand of our firſt Father, God Almighty, *who hath given us all Things, which pertain unto Life.*[q]

The old Philoſophers ſtiled God *the Father of the World*, and it is the conſtant Practice of the Poets to ſpeak of all their Gods, eſpecially *Jupiter*, by that Appellation. *God* and *Father* are Terms almoſt inſeparable in *Homer*; ἀνδρῶν τὲ θεῶν τὲ πατὴρ, *Father of Men and Gods* is his conſtant Invocation; and by that Title the Supreme Eſſence is more generally known in his Writings, than by any other: I mention this only to ſhew, that Nature ſeems to dictate a Notion of Paternity or Fatherhood being implied by Creation.

Moſes calls the Creation *the Generation of the Heavens and the Earth.*[r] If then Generation be the ſame with Creation, Generator or Father muſt

[q] 2 Pet. i. 3. [r] Gen. i. 4.

ART. I. be the ſame with Creator: We read that when the Foundations of the Earth were laid—*the Morning Stars ſang together, and all the Sons of God ſhouted for Joy.*[s] Man is in an eſpecial Manner called his Off-ſpring, even in the Language of the Heathens, as is charged upon them by St. *Paul*, in a Quotation from *Aratus*:[t] And the Prophet plainly aſſerts Creation to be ſufficient to conſtitute a Right of Paternity, for *have we not all one Father* (ſaith he) *hath not one God created us?*[u]

This firſt Notion of God's Paternity then, founded on Creation figuratively as it were for Procreation, is univerſal, and as ancient as Creation itſelf.

God's ſecond Claim to this Title is founded on Redemption; for thus *Moſes* to the *Iſraelites: Is not he thy Father, who hath bought thee?*[w] And thus the Prophet: *Doubtleſs thou art our Father; though* Abraham *be ignorant of us, and* Iſrael *acknowledge us not, thou O Lord art our Father, our Redeemer.*[x]

Nor is this natural the ſole Foundation of this Relation between God and us: There is alſo a civil and voluntary one, which is Adoption; by which it may be conſtituted where it never, in any Senſe, ſubſiſted before:—That our Title therefore might be perfect, and without Flaw, although we were already the Children of God, both by Nature and Redemption, he hath added this alſo: *And we have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry* Abba, *Father*;[y] a Tie more endearing, than that of Nature: Therefore *Behold* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *what Manner of Love the Father hath beſtowed upon us, that we ſhould be called the Sons of God.*[z]

Secondly,

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[s] Job, xxxviii. 7. [t] Acts, xvii. 28. [u] Mal. ii. 10.
[w] Deut. xxxii. 6. [x] Iſaiah, lxiii. 16. [y] Rom. viii. 15.
[z] 1 John, iii. 1.

ART. I.

Secondly, The Title of *Father* is here added to God, in order to diſtinguiſh him from the two other Perſons who alſo *bear Record in Heaven, the Son* and *the Holy Ghoſt:*[a] But

Thirdly, The moſt eminent Notion of God's Paternity is with reſpect to that Perſon, who is called his Son, κατ' ἐξοχήν by way of Eminence, his *only begotten*,[b] his *beloved Son*;[c] as he is the *Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt:*[d] How and in what Manner this Relation ſubſiſts, will come more properly under Conſideration in the next Article; ſuffice it then for the preſent to ſay, that it is greatly different from any Conſtruction of it with regard to ourſelves: To ſay Truth, it is in this Senſe only that the Term *Father* ſeems to be added to God in the Creed, and accordingly many Expoſitors have given no other Interpretation of it: The Senſe of the Terms is evident even from the Connection of them; God is *the Father*, on Account of his Relation to the *Son*; as *Jeſus Chriſt* is called the *Son*, with reſpect to his Relation to the *Father*. I ſhall take Leave of this Particular with obſerving, that this being the evident Senſe of the Terms in the ſacred Form of Baptiſm, which was dictated by *Chriſt* himſelf to the Apoſtles,[e] on which the Creed is principally founded, it is moſt rational to aſſign it alſo to the Words under our preſent Conſideration.

But as by the *Chriſtian Verity* we are obliged in the Godhead to admit of three diſtinct Perſons, all upon an Equality with each other, it will be neceſſary to inquire briefly what particular Prerogative belongs to the *Father*, and wherein the peculiar Eminency of the Term doth conſiſt.

Our

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[a] 1 John, v. 7. [b] John i. Heb. i. 5. [c] Matt. iii. 17. xvii. 5. [d] Rom. xv. 6. 2 Cor. i. 3, &c. [e] Matt. xxviii. 19.

ART. I. Our bleſſed Saviour, though he expreſsly declares that *the Father and he are one*,[f] and that whoſoever hath ſeen him *hath ſeen the Father*,[g] yet he elſewhere confeſſeth, that he *can* of himſelf *do nothing*;[h] but that whatſoever he hath, he hath received from the *Father*.[i]

So then it appears, that there is an Excellency in the *Father*, in that whatſoever he hath, he hath it ſolely of himſelf, by a mere Neceſſity in his own eternal and unalterable Nature; but the *Son* hath nothing but what he hath by *Communication* from the *Father*; nor can it be on any other Foundation that the Son, who elſewhere ſtrenuouſly aſſerts an Equality with the Father, once plainly acknowledges a Superiority, *My Father is greater than I*.[k]

Laſtly, The Term itſelf contains ſomewhat of Dignity in it, and would oblige us to ſee, and acknowledge ſome particular Eminency in the Father, though we were never ſo much at a loſs to find out what it was, and wherein it conſiſted.[l]

The next Thing, which offers itſelf in this Article, is that great and glorious Attribute of God, by which he rules, and governs every thing with an unlimited and abſolute Dominion, expreſſed by the Word *Almighty*.[m]

This *Omnipotence* or *Almightineſs* conſiſteth in a Capacity

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[f] John, x. 30. [g] Ib. xiv. 9. [h] Ib. v. 19, 30. [i] Evang. Joh. *paſſim*. [k] The only Difference between the Father and the Son (ſaith *Vigilius*) is this, Filius genitus, Pater autem ingenitus. *De Trinit.* lib. 2. The Senſe of which we find well expreſs'd in one of our Creeds, *The Son is of the Father—begotten; the Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten.* Symbol. Athanaſ. [l] Οὐδὲ τις ἀρνεῖται, &c. Nor doth any one deny that the Father is greater than the Son, not as differing from him, either in Subſtance or any other Reſpect, but purely becauſe the Term *Father* is ſuperior to that of *Son*. *Declaration of the Orthodox Biſhops at* Serdica. *See* Theodor. Eccleſ. Hiſt. lib. ii. c. 8. [m] Παντοκράτωρ.

a Capacity or Power of forming every Thing agreeable to the abſolute Freedom of his own Will, and of uſing and diſpoſing of all ſuch his Creatures according to his own good Pleaſure; and that each of theſe high Prerogatives doth belong in the moſt eminent Manner to God, is abundantly evident, not only from Scripture, but from many other Conſiderations. In the ſacred Syſtem he is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the *firſt and the laſt*,[n] *whoſe Kingdom ruleth over all*;[o] *who made all Things, and for whoſe Pleaſure they are, and were created*;[p] whoſe are the Heavens, and the Earth, *the World, and the Fullneſs thereof*;[q] who filleth Earth, Air and Sea;[r] *and before whom* even *Hell* itſelf *is open, and Deſtruction hath no Covering*;[s] *in whoſe Hands are all the Corners of the Earth*;[t] *the Lord God omnipotent.*[u] This is the Language of Holy Scripture with reſpect to God's Omnipotence, and, if we will attend to them, Reaſon and Experience will daily inſtruct us in the ſame Leſſon. ART. I.

Nay, Infidelity herſelf is no Infidel here: The very *Heathen* Theology is crowded with this Doctrine; their Philoſophers urge and demonſtrate, their Poets celebrate it. "There is nothing (ſays "*Cicero*) which God cannot effect, and that too "without the leaſt Labour, or Difficulty: All "Things are made, directed, or alter'd by him "with as much Eaſe as we move our Limbs, and "Members, ſuitable to our own Fancies."[w] Again, "Let Men be aſſured (ſays he) that God is the Ruler "and Diſpoſer of all Things, and that whatſoever is effected, is effected by his ſole Providence "and Appointment."[x]

I proceed

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[n] Apoc. i. 2. [o] Pſalm ciii. 19. [p] Apoc. iv. 11.
[q] Pſ. xxiv. [r] Pſ. cxxxix. [s] Job, xxvi. 6. [t] Pſ. xcv. 4.
[u] Apoc. iv. 8. [w] De Nat. Deorum. [x] De Legib. ii. 15.

ART. I. I proceed to the laſt particular of this Article, *Maker of Heaven and Earth*; which we are told was not expreſsly contained in many of the firſt Creeds, yet 'tis certain that it is found in moſt of thoſe Rules of Faith, which were delivered by the primitive Fathers, and I think virtually contained in them all. "We believe (ſaith *Irenæus*) in one "God, the Father Almighty, who made Heaven, "Earth, the Seas, and all Things contained in "them."[y] "We acknowledge (ſaith *Tertullian*) "one only God, the ſame who made the World, "and produced all Things out of nothing."[z]

By the Terms *Heaven* and *Earth* we do not mean barely that Expanſe, which ſerves as a *Curtain* to this lower World; or that terreſtrial Orb, which we cultivate and inhabit: Within thoſe comprehenſive Words are contained as well the Furniture as Matter of each, Plants, Animals, Men, and Angels: In a Word, all Things *viſible*, and *inviſible*, animate, and inanimate, celeſtial, terreſtrial, and infernal.

I ſhall not enter into Arguments againſt the *Ariſtotelian* and *Epicurean* Hypotheſes, one of which teaches, that the World is eternal, and in a great Meaſure ſelf-exiſtent; and the Abettors of the other would perſuade us, that it owes its Birth to ſome ſtrange, unintelligible Cauſe, which they call *the fortuitous Concourſe of Atoms*; that is, that there were from all Eternity certain ſmall Particles of Matter, fluctuating indeterminately backwards and forwards in the *Void* of Space; at laſt, ſome how or other (I know not how, nor they neither) they jumbled themſelves together into that beautiful and regular Form, in which we have ſeen them

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[y] Adv. Hæreſ. lib. 1. c. 2. [z] De Præſcript. adv. Hæret. c. 13.

them ever ſince. Man himſelf, according to them, had no better Original than to be the Baſtard, or rather Spawn of Chance. Let their fellow Heathens confute and expoſe them, which by the way they have ſufficiently done: [a] For my Part, till I ſee an Heap of unformed, miſhapen Particles of Braſs or Iron jump at once into a regular Machine, or an Aſſemblage of Words and Syllables ſhaken into an ingenious and accurate Poem, or Tract of Philoſophy, I ſhall think we may juſtly with-hold our Aſſent from ſuch a whimſical and unnatural Hypotheſis. ART. I.

Suppoſe we bring the Matter to Reaſon, Is there even a Poſſibility of fancying this exact, this beautiful, and conſiſtent Compoſition to be leſs than the Work of excellent Contrivance, Power and Wiſdom? Our own Frame were an Obſtacle we ſhould never get over, were we to ſet upon ſuch an unphiloſophical Suppoſition; but let us turn to that plain and conſiſtent Account of this Work, and its Author, which we have delivered to us in that nobleſt, and beſt atteſted of Hiſtories, the *Holy Bible:* There we are informed, that *In the Beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth,* [b] and every particular and individual Part of them; the

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[a] See *Ovid*'s Account of the Creation; which ſeems to have been almoſt tranſcribed from the Book of *Geneſis. Metamorph.* lib. 1. See alſo *Cicero,* "The Beauty of the World, the "Order obſerved in the Heavenly Bodies, and in the Revo- "lutions of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, do ſufficiently declare "them not to be the Work of Chance." *De Divinat.* And again, "Whoever conſiders the conſtant and regular Mo- "tion, the Changes, Orders, Bulk, and Number of the Hea- "venly Bodies, cannot but perceive that they are ſubject to "ſome Power; but ſince both the Strength and Wiſdom of "Man are greatly inferior to the Taſk, God only muſt be "the Architect, and Manager of this vaſt Machine." *De Nat. Deorum.* [b] Gen. i. 1.

ART. I. the Angels, Luminaries, and all the Hoſt of Heaven, the Fowls of the Air, the Beaſts of the Earth, the Fiſhes of the Sea, the Elements, and all their Inhabitants, Man himſelf not excepted, are the Effect of this Operation:[c] In a Word, there is nothing throughout the vaſt Expanſe, which can boaſt another Original; *nor without him was there any Thing made, that was made.*[d]

But of the Fact enough: I ſhall offer a Word or two with regard to ſome Particulars relating to it, and then diſmiſs the Article.

In the firſt Place then we are further to believe, for ſo are we expreſsly informed, and ſo much indeed does the Term *Creation* imply, that the World was not formed from any ancient, pre-exiſtent Matter,[e] but from a mere Void; in a Word, from nothing: That God not only diſpoſed the Matter or Subſtance of it into that Form and Order in which it now is, but even called the Matter itſelf into Being, which before had no Exiſtence, ſave in the Divine Will.[f] Difficult as this may appear, yet is that *Omnipotence*, or *Almightineſs*, which we have already had Occaſion to conſider, ſufficient to anſwer it: Nay, in ſhort there is no one Article of Creation more eaſy; for there is not one, the leaſt, but what would be an Over-match for any Thing leſs than *Omnipotence*.

Again, we are to guard againſt an Error, into which it is ſaid the great *Origen* was betrayed, that the World hath (by theſe Means however) ſubſiſted already infinite Ages, ſince by the ſacred Chronicle it appears to be not yet quite ſix Thouſand

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[c] Gen. *paſſim.* [d] John, i. 3. [e] As was taught by many ancient Hereticks, thence called *Materialiſts*; particularly *Hermogenes*, *Seleucus*, and *Hermias*, at the Cloſe of the ſecond Century. [f] Rom. iv. 17.

ſand Years old. The *Egyptians* and *Aſſyrians* indeed formerly, and the *Chineſe* at this Day, pretend to produce Records of Years long before this Account: But were there nothing elſe to confute them, as there are many Things, yet *Holy Scripture* gives ample Demonſtration of their Miſtake. The very Generations of Men which might from thence be eaſily reckoned up, is an Evidence which would ſettle the Point within a very little Matter.[g] ART. I.

The laſt Thing to be conſidered in this Article is the Means, which God uſed in this Work of Creation; which was neither manual Operation with reſpect to himſelf, as ſome have impiouſly and abſurdly fancied,[h] nor yet the Miniſtry of Angels, as others have ſuppoſed;[i] but the ſole and entire Inſtrument was the Divine *Fiat*; the active and efficacious WORD of God: He had only to ſay *Let* ſuch a Thing *be*; and immediately *it was ſo.*[k]—*Thus the Heavens and the Earth were finiſhed, and all the Hoſt of them*;[l] the laſting Monuments of God's Power and Goodneſs.

As I truſt theſe Obſervations, how brief ſoever, are yet ſufficient to anſwer the Ends I propoſed, I ſhall now venture to diſmiſs this Article with a ſhort Recapitulation of what has been offered upon it.

Whenever

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[g] From *Chriſt* backward to *Abraham* were forty and two Generations, *Matt.* i. From *Abraham* to *Adam* nineteen; in the Whole, ſixty-one Generations; which could not poſſibly extend to more than four Thouſand Years: About which Time is generally allowed between *Adam* and *Chriſt*. From the latter, our Accounts are tolerably clear, and the former was within a very few Days co-æval with the World.

[h] The *Anthropomorphitæ*, Followers of one *Audæus*, a *Syrian*, in the fourth Century; and others.

[i] The *Archonticks* in particular. The ſame Opinion is held by the Generality of the *Mahometans* at this Day.

[k] Gen. i. [l] Ib. ii. 1.

ART. I. Whenever then in the Words of this Article I ſay *I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth*, I am conceived to ſay thus much: I believe that there is a God; that is, a Being, who was from all Eternity, and will be without End, ſelf-exiſtent, independant, and endued with every Excellence conceivable in the moſt perfect Degree. I conſider this Being in Quality of a *Father*, as he is the univerſal Parent of all the World; but in a more particular Manner I acknowledge his Right to this Appellation, as being the *Father* of his *only begotten Son*, our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; and I here add it to his Name, as well on this Account, as to diſtinguiſh him from the other two Perſons in the ſacred Trinity. I furthermore aſcribe to this Being infinite Power and Dominion, and (in Oppoſition, as well to certain Hereticks in the *Chriſtian* Church,[m] as to ſome of the ancient Philoſophers[n]) acknowledge him to be the true and ſole Author of Creation, both viſible and inviſible; that theſe *Heavens*, and this *Earth* eſpecially, were by the free and voluntary Act of the Will of God (of which no Motive can be aſſigned, but his own infinite Goodneſs) produced out of *Nothing*, in Obedience to his bare Word; and that at a certain determinate Time, agreeable to his own good Pleaſure; and, as I have good Reaſon to believe, ſomewhat leſs than ſix Thouſand Years ago. And in this full Latitude I *believe*, and aſſent to this firſt Article of the *Chriſtian Faith*.

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[m] The Followers of *Saturninus*, *Baſilides*, *Manes*, &c. Many of them held two Principles, the one good, and the other evil; the latter of which (they taught) was the Author of Creation; others, that it was effected by the Angels without the Interpoſition of the Supreme Being. [n] *Epicurus*, &c.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE II.

And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

ARTICLE II.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,

ARTICLE II.

And in Jeſus Chriſt, his only Son, our Lord.

ACTS viii. latter Part of Ver. 37.

— I believe that Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God.

ART. II.

THIS Confeſſion of the *Eunuch* preſents us with the Subſtance of the ſecond Article of our Creed, which runs thus, *And in Jeſus Chriſt, his only Son, our Lord*; to which, as I have formerly obſerved, muſt be prefixed the Words *I believe.*

The Connection of this Article with the foregoing is obſerved to be very juſt; that as in the Divinity there is nothing intervening between the Father and the Son, ſo that immediate Union might be perpetually expreſs'd by a conſtant Conjunction in our *Chriſtian* Confeſſion. The moſt proper Method I can make uſe of, in order to the Illuſtration of this Article, will, I conceive, be to inquire, firſt, what is to be underſtood by thus believing in *Jeſus Chriſt*; and ſecondly, what Warrant or Authority we have for ſuch a Belief.

With regard to the firſt, in order to diſcharge ourſelves rightly of the Duty, which is here laid upon us, there is ſomething further requiſite beſides barely to believe that there was once on Earth a Perſon, who was called *Jeſus Chriſt*, or that he ſpake or acted ſuch Things as are recorded of him

ART. II. in the Evangelical Hiſtory; we are to receive him alſo in the ſeveral Characters or Offices he is ſaid to have borne, and to believe on him, in the full Senſe and Import of the Words.

In the ſacred Scriptures then, and agreeable to them here in our Creed alſo, this Perſon is repreſented to us under a threefold Deſcription: Firſt by his Nomination, as *Jeſus Chriſt*; ſecondly by his Relation to God, as *his only Son*; and thirdly to us, as *our Lord*.

With reſpect to his Nomination, though he is promiſcuouſly ſpoken of in the Holy Writings, ſometimes by the Name of *Jeſus*, ſometimes by that of *Chriſt*, it appears that the former only was his proper Name, the latter an expreſſive Epithet, denoting his Character: This was not given him till many Years after his Birth; the other on the Day of his Circumciſion, conformable to the Directions of the Angel whilſt he was yet in the Womb.[a]

This Name, ſignificant as it is, had been borne by ſeveral before our Saviour, and once even by Divine Appointment it was given to the Son of *Nun*, who by the Part he was to bear in the temporal Deliverances, and Eſtabliſhment of the *Iſraelites*, was a Type of that future *Joſhua* or *Jeſus*, who was to *ſave his People from their Sins*. For the Word is the ſame, but by Length of Time, and an Incorporation with the *Greek*, it underwent ſuch Alterations as from *Jeboſhua* to become *Jeſus*; and as a Proof that they are the ſame, the very Name *Jeſus* is given to the Son of *Nun* both by St. *Stephen* and St. *Paul*.[b]

Oſhea, which was the original Name of *Joſhua*, ſignifies

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[a] Luke, ii. 21. [b] Acts, vii. 45. Heb. iv. 8.

ſignifies in the *Hebrew* Tongue *a Saviour*; and notwithſtanding it paſſes through five ſeveral Stages e're it come to *Jeſus*, as from *Oſhea* to *Jehoſhua*, from *Jehoſhua* to *Jeſhua*, from *Jeſhua* to *Jeſhu*, and from thence to *Jeſus*; yet it is certain that it retains the ſame Senſe, for this is the Reaſon, which the Angel aſſigns for the Child's being called *Jeſus*, *viz.* becauſe *He ſhall* SAVE *his People from their Sins.*[c] ART. II.

We may obſerve, that this Epithet was very cuſtomarily given by the *Heathens* to their Gods, and ſometimes to their Emperors and great Men: Altars were inſcribed to ſuch an one THE SAVIOUR: But whatever Opinion they had of the Word in thus applying it, it is certain that in its true Senſe it belongs only to *Jeſus Chriſt*; in whoſe Name alone we have *Salvation* properly ſo called.

The Word *Jeſus* being ſhewn to ſignify a Saviour, proceed we to inquire how, and in what Latitude it belongs ſo peculiarly to the Perſon eminently and emphatically ſo called.

In the firſt Place then it may juſtly be aſcribed to him, as having declared and explained to us the only true Way of obtaining eternal Salvation; for *the Words which* he ſpake *unto us, they are the Spirit, and they are the Life*;[d] and the Apoſtle expreſsly ſtiles his Goſpel *the Power of God unto Salvation, to every one who believeth.*[e]

But ſecondly, he hath not only revealed, but hath alſo purchaſed Salvation for us; and that at no leſs coſtly a Price than his own Blood. By the unhappy Lapſe of our firſt Parent, we were *all concluded under Sin*;[f] now *the Wages of Sin is Death*;[g] which Death (not of the Body but of the

[c] Matt. i. 24. [d] John, vi. 63. [e] Rom. i. 16. [f] Ib. iii. 9. [g] Ib. vi. 23.

ART. II. Soul, not temporal but eternal) we muſt unavoidably have undergone, had not this our Saviour bought us off from it at the aforementioned Price, and (in ſuch Manner and by ſuch Means as it will hereafter be our Buſineſs to conſider) deliver'd us from that Curſe.[h] In a Word, ſo emphatically does the Term *Saviour* belong to him, that *there is no Salvation in any other, neither is there any other Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we can be ſaved.*[i]

The next Thing to be conſider'd is his venerable *Agnomen*, or Title; proceed we then to inquire why and in what Senſe this *Jeſus* is called *Chriſt*.

We meet with two Words in the ſacred Writings promiſcuouſly applied to *Jeſus*, as being expreſſive of the ſame Senſe, and in Effect the ſame. *Andrew*, upon meeting with *Jeſus*, tells his Brother, "*We* have found the *Meſſiah*."[k] "I know "that the *Meſſiah* cometh,"[l] ſaith the *Samaritan* Woman: The ſame Term is ſometimes met with in the Prophecies, particularly that of *Daniel*.[m] On the other hand, the Doctrine of the Apoſtles is, that "This *Jeſus* is the *Chriſt*."[n] Yet they all ſay the very ſame Thing. *Daniel*, *Andrew*, and the Woman of *Samaria* ſpake *Hebrew*, or *Syriac*, the Apoſtles wrote in *Greek*; (the moſt common Language of that Age.) The Signification of each in our Tongue is *The Anointed*; ſo that in Propriety, when we ſpeak of him in our own Language, we ought to ſay *Jeſus the Anointed*; but the *Latins* having adopted the *Greek* Word (Χριστος, *Chriſtos*) and put it into their Characters, other Lan-

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[h] *See* Art. iv. and x. [i] Acts, iv. 12. [k] John, i. 41. [l] Ib. iv. 25. [m] *See* Dan. ix. 25,26. [n] *See* Acts, xvii. 3. xviii. 5, 28. ii. 36.

Languages have followed the Example; and we having model'd it by the *Engliſh*, or rather *Saxon* Standard, retain it every where on this Occaſion, and, inſtead of *Jeſus the Anointed*, ſay with them *Jeſus the Chriſt*, or *Jeſus Chriſt*. But to the Signification of the Term— ART. II.

It was an ancient and eſtabliſhed Cuſtom, not only among the *Jews* but other Nations, to perform the Ceremony of *Inunction*, or anointing with Oil over whatever Perſon or Thing was intended for any ſolemn Office or Service; and whatſoever was thus anointed, became thereby conſecrated to thoſe Purpoſes. Thus *Jacob*, for Inſtance, conſecrated to God his double Pillar in *Bethel*:[o] Thus *Moſes*, by Divine Injunction, ſanctified both the Tabernacle and its Veſſels;[p] and in the ſame Manner, and by the ſame Ordinance were both the Kings and Prieſts ſet apart, and conſecrated to their reſpective high Offices.[q]

This Title therefore is applicable to *Jeſus*, in Virtue of ſome high and ſpecial Office to which he hath been ordained by God, and ſet apart thereto, as were formerly the Kings and Prieſts by the ſolemn Ceremony of Inunction. And indeed *Jeſus* is anointed to, and by this Inunction becomes poſſeſs'd of three ſpecial Offices, *viz.* thoſe of our Prophet, our Prieſt, and our King.

As the firſt, he was ordained to declare to us the joyful Tidings of Salvation, and (as the Word alſo imports a Lawgiver) to give Mankind that Law which is to be the Rule of their Actions, and the Standard and Touchſtone of their Virtue.

By this Office he is prophetically characteris'd

[o] Geneſis, xxviii. 18. xxxv. 14. [p] Levit. viii. 10, *&c.*
[q] *See* Exod. xxviii. 41. xxix. 7. and the Books of Samuel and the Kings.

ART. II. by the Prophet *Iſaiah* thus: *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, becauſe he hath appointed me to preach the Goſpel to the Poor*;[r] as is evident from our Saviour's applying thoſe Words to himſelf, citing them as ſpoken of him, and declaring them to be fulfilled in his Perſon; which he doth openly in the Synagogue at *Nazareth*.[s] He conſtantly ſpeaks both to his Diſciples and the Multitude in the Style and Manner of a Lawgiver—*I ſay unto you*.[t] His Declarations are peremptory; he taught *as one having Authority, and not* by Gloſſes and Comments on the Law, *as did the Scribes*:[u] And laſtly he adds this Aſſurance, that upon the Principles of his Law we ſhall be judged at the laſt Day: *The Word which I have ſpoken, the ſame ſhall judge him at the laſt Day*.[w]

And indeed never was Prophet ſo ſolemnly anointed as he was: The *Holy Spirit* is his Oil; and his Character and Authority are openly declared by the Voice of the Almighty Father:[x] Nor ever was Miſſion ſo ſtrongly atteſted as his; his whole Life being one continued Scene of Miracles; his very Enemies being oftentimes obliged to confeſs, that the *Finger of God* was with him: Angels, Men and Devils bearing him witneſs, and the aſtoniſhed Multitude declaring, that *It was never ſo ſeen in Iſrael*.[y]

Theſe extraordinary Operations, at the ſame Time that they confirmed the Divine Miſſion, did alſo declare the Office of *Jeſus Chriſt*; for they had cuſtomarily been the Badges of thoſe who had borne the prophetic Character, in order to procure them due Reverence and Credit, and to countenance

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[r] Iſaiah, lxi. 1.
[s] Luke, iv. 21.
[t] *See* Matth. v.
[u] Matth. vii. 29.
[w] John, xii. 48.
[x] *See* Matth. iii.
[y] Matt. xii. 38.

countenance any Innovations they were by God appointed to make, either in the eccleſiaſtical or civil Eſtabliſhments.[z] Accordingly the *Jews* required *Jeſus* to give Proof of his Inunction to the prophetic Office, by giving them *a Sign*,[a] as they called it, that is, by working a Miracle; which tho' he refuſed at the Inſtant, yet if giving Sight to the Blind, Speech to the Dumb, Hearing to the Deaf, Motion and Strength to the Lame, and even Life to the Dead: If theſe I ſay are Miracles, he at other Times abundantly complied with them. We have here a favourable Opportunity of obſerving, that theſe were the united Characteriſticks of that great, that long promiſed, and long expected Prophet: Therefore when the *Baptiſt* ſent his Diſciples to *Jeſus*, to demand of him whether he were *He that ſhould come*, *Jeſus* anſwers by referring him to his own Actions, and the prefigured Character of the *Meſſiah*, from a juſt Collation of which he could not fail of a full Reſolution of his Queſtion in the affirmative: *Go and ſhew* John *again thoſe Things which ye do hear, and ſee; the Blind receive their Sight, and the Lame walk, the Lepers are cleanſed, and the Deaf hear, the Dead are raiſed up, and the Poor have the Goſpel preached unto them*;[b] all which *Iſaiah* had long ſince foretold ſhould be the Diagnoſticks, or Signs of the Perſon he inquired after.[c] But to return:

ART. III.

The prophetic Office, as I have above obſerved, as applicable to *Jeſus*, conſiſteth in this, *viz.* the Promulgation, Eſtabliſhment, and Perpetuation of the *Goſpel*, or Doctrine, containing the Will of God for the Salvation of Mankind: And in this Senſe *Jeſus* was anointed to be, and we do

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[z] *See* Deut. xiii. 1, *&c.* [a] Matt. xii. 38. [b] Matt. xi. 4, 5.
[c] Iſaiah, xxxv. 6. lxi. 1.

ART. II. do receive and acknowledge him for our PROPHET.

In Conjunction with the *prophetic*, he was alſo anointed to the *ſacerdotal* or *prieſtly* Office, by which he became an *High-Prieſt for ever, after the Order of Melchiſedeck.*[d]

Now the grand Buſineſs of the High-Prieſt was by an expiatory Sacrifice to *make Atonement for the Sins of the People:*[e] And never was this Buſineſs ſo well and ſo compleatly executed, as by this our High-Prieſt; *who by his own Oblation of himſelf once offered upon the Croſs, made there a full, perfect, and ſufficient Sacrifice, Oblation and Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World.*[f]

Another Part of the High-Prieſt's Office was to make Interceſſion; which *Jeſus Chriſt* doth for us in the moſt prevalent Manner: On this Foundation the Apoſtle builds that Perſuaſion, that *he is able to ſave thoſe unto the uttermoſt, who come unto God by him; ſeeing that he ever liveth to make Interceſſion for them.*[g]

Another Privilege peculiar to the Character was that of *bleſſing*, or *ſanctifying*: Aaron *was ſeparated, that he ſhould ſanctify the moſt holy Things, to burn Incenſe before the Lord, and to* BLESS *in his Name for ever*;[h] and we read of no other ſacerdotal Act performed by *Melchiſedeck*, but only this of *bleſſing*. This alſo was in a peculiar Manner exerciſed by *Jeſus* ſeveral Times, and in a very ſolemn Manner; his Power and Right appearing in that his Bleſſing was always effectual and beneficial, as always conveying ſome miraculous Benefit to the Object, and to his Diſciples even the Holy Ghoſt, and ſupernatural Power.[i] In a Word, ſo extenſive

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[d] Heb. v. 10. [e] *See* Levit. iv, *&c.* [f] Offic. Euchariſt.
[g] Heb. vii. 25. [h] 1 Chron. xxiii. 13. [i] John, xx. 22.

extenſive was this Power in him, that as the Apoſtle teaches, having been raiſed up by God, he was ſent on purpoſe to BLESS *us, in turning every one of us away from our Iniquities.*[k] ART. II.

From theſe Premiſes we may ſafely conclude, that this *Jeſus*, who ſo remarkably exerciſed every Part of the *ſacerdotal* Function, who offered up for us a moſt full and perfect Sacrifice, who ſtill maketh continual Interceſſion for us, and who procured for and confer'd on us an everlaſting Benediction, is moſt truly, and in the moſt eminent Manner, our PRIEST.

The third Office belonging to the *Meſſiah*, and to which the Holy *Jeſus* was anointed, is the *regal*, or Office of a King; as is evident both from ancient Prophecies and ancient Traditions. Such of the former as ſpeak of him in this reſpect are numerous;[l] and that they do ſpeak of him is demonſtrable from the unerring Application of them by the Angel *Gabriel*, in his Salutation to the bleſſed Virgin: *The Lord God ſhall give unto him* (ſaith he) *the Throne of his Father* David, *and he ſhall reign over the Houſe of* Jacob *for ever, and of his Kingdom there ſhall be no End.*[m] A Circumſtance which had been often promiſed by the Prophets, and ſometimes expreſsly by God himſelf;[n] with which Promiſes the Expectations of the *Jews* were ſo big, that they ſeldom ſpake of the *Meſſiah* without the Addition of the regal Title; as may be ſeen in the Writings of the Rabbins and Paraphraſts.

We have from himſelf a pregnant Acknowledgment of this Office, in his ſolemn Entry into *Jeruſalem*;

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[k] Acts, iii. 26. [l] *See* Pſ. ii. 6. Iſaiah, xxxii. 1. Jerem. xxiii. 5. Ezek. xxvii. 32, *&c.* [m] Luke, i. 32, 33. [n] Iſ. ix. 6, 7. Numb. xxiv. 17. Pſ. cxxxii. 11. Acts, ii. 30, *&c.*

ART. II. *Jeruſalem*; (though indeed a very ſtrange and remarkable one) no Vehicle but a *Colt, the Foal of an Aſs*; no Attendants but the voluntary Crowd:[o] This has little Appearance of a regal Triumph; yet in it we ſee compleated the famous Prophecy of *Zechariah*, who deſcribes this Circumſtance with the utmoſt Exactneſs: *Rejoice greatly* (ſaith he) *O Daughter of Zion; ſhout O Daughter of Jeruſalem, behold thy* KING *cometh unto thee; he is juſt, and having Salvation; lowly, and riding upon an Aſs, and upon a Colt, the Foal of an Aſs.*[p]

The *Jews* ever did, and do to this Day, in the Perſon of their *Meſſiah*, expect a King; but their grand Miſtake is in the Nature of his Kingdom: Being an ambitious and earthly minded People, they fondly flatter'd themſelves that he was to be a temporal Prince and Deliverer; that he was to reſtore and aggrandize their Nation, and to make his Appearance with all the Pomp and Apparatus of an earthly Monarch: Or rather indeed they were led from thoſe Principles to over-look all the Paſſages which relate to his firſt Appearance, and to turn their Eyes wholly on thoſe which contained the Account of his triumphant Return; for to ſay that they had no Foundations for the Expectations of a glorious *Meſſiah*, were to be-lye the *Holy Spirit*, and to err againſt the moſt pregnant and expreſs Declarations. This however was always the prevalent Notion, as appears from the Complaint of *Cleophas*, on the Way to *Emmaus*;[q] from the ambitious Requeſt of the Sons of *Zebedee*;[r] and from the direct Queſtion put to *Jeſus* by the Diſciples after his Reſurrection, *Lord wilt thou at this Time reſtore the Kingdom to* Iſrael?[s]

Whereas

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[o] Matth. xxi. [p] Zech. ix. 9. [q] Luke, xxiv. 21.
[r] Mark, x. 35. [s] Acts, i. 6.

Whereas by our Saviour's Account no ſuch Thing was to be expected, at leaſt at preſent: He acknowledged he was then a King indeed, but at the ſame Time declared that his Kingdom was *not of this World*; [t] *i. e.* not to take Place under the preſent Order and Œconomy of Things. ART. III.

Chriſt's Kingdom for the preſent then conſiſteth in this, *viz.* an unlimited Power over the Church of the Faithful, who are his Subjects; in ruling, protecting, and rewarding his People; in giving poſitive Laws, and by his ſole Right and Authority backing thoſe Laws with the ſeveral Sanctions of Rewards and Puniſhments: And to ſay Truth, the regal Title cannot belong ſo *juſtly* to any as to him, who reigns in the *Hearts* of his Subjects; or ſo *extenſively* as to that Prince, whoſe *Dominion* ſhall one Day, as God hath promiſed, reach unto the Ends of the Earth; [u] take in even Hell, and the Grave; [w] and in a Word, comprehend the whole Circuit of Creation.

Viſible Demonſtrations of his regal Power hath he already given, particularly in the remarkable Vengeance which he took on the perfidious *Jews*; which Circumſtance he expreſsly ſpeaks of as the Commencement of his Sovereignty: *There be ſome*, (ſays he) *ſtanding here, who ſhall not taſte of Death till they ſee the Son of Man* coming in his Kingdom; [x] ſpeaking of St. *John*, who ſurvived the final Deſtruction of the *Jewiſh* State and Nation about thirty Years.

But far more ſplendid Proofs will he give at his ſecond Coming, *when he ſhall have put down all Rule, and all Authority and Power, and ſubdued all Enemies under his Feet*: [y] Then ſhall truly commence

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[t] John, xviii. 36. [u] Zech. ix. 10. [w] 1 Cor. xv. 25.
[x] Matth. xvi. 28. [y] 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25.

ART. II. mence that Reign which is to endure for ever, and that Dominion to which there will be no End.

Thus much for the firſt Particular, namely, the Denomination of *Chriſt Jeſus:* The next Thing which occurs to us in this Article is his Filiation; the Relation he ſtands in to God, *viz.* as *His only Son*; concerning which I proceed to offer ſome Conſiderations.

The Appellation of *Son* is what we indeed all hope to have a Title to with reſpect to God Almighty; the Foundation of which may appear from my Obſervations on the Word *Father* in the foregoing Article: But here there is ſomething of a Peculiarity, which we have not yet ſeen; for unto which of *us*, nay, *Unto which of the Angels ſaid he at any Time, thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he ſhall be to me a Son?*[z] But ſtrong and remarkable is his Teſtimony to the Legality of this his *Firſt-born*, in that he not only heard, and anſwered every Requeſt made by him in that Quality, ſealed the Truth of the Claim with a long Chain of Miracles, but expreſsly declared it with his own Mouth in a ſolemn and audible Manner, and that too more than once; firſt on the Banks of *Jordan*,[a] and again afterwards on the Top of Mount *Tabor*.[b]

Thoſe who are fond of expatiating on Things aſſert *Chriſt*'s Right to this Appellation ſeveral different Ways; but I cannot think we are concerned with more than two at the moſt; one founded on his Birth, or Entrance upon human Life, which was not in the common Way, or after the ordinary Means of Generation, but by the

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[z] Heb. i. 5. [a] Matt. iii. 17. [b] Ib. xvii. 5.

the immediate Spirit and Power of God: For his Mother, without any Congreſs with her Huſband, and when as herſelf affirms ſhe *knew not a Man*,[c] was impregnated by the *Holy Ghoſt*.[d] This is ſo evidently a Reaſon for *Chriſt*'s being called the *Son of God*, that it is even aſſigned by the Angel at the Time that he deliver'd the joyful Tidings to his Virgin Mother; for on her remonſtrating concerning the Improbability of her Conception, ſeeing ſhe *knew not a Man*, *Behold* (ſaith he) *the Holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee, and the Power of the Higheſt ſhall overſhadow thee*; THEREFORE *alſo that holy Thing which ſhall be born of thee ſhall be called* THE SON OF GOD.[e] ART. II.

But there is yet a nobler and more exalted Senſe, in which we are to underſtand this Relation between *Jeſus* and the Almighty Father; for he did not then firſt (*viz.* ſomewhat more than 1700 Years ago, in the Reign of *Auguſtus Cæſar*) commence to be the *Son of God*, but was ſo long *before the Foundations of the World were laid*, even *from everlaſting*.

It ſeems to have been the principal Deſign of St. *John*'s Writings, to confirm and illuſtrate this myſterious Truth: (and with good Reaſon indeed is it ſo often and ſo ſtrongly urged by the ſacred Writers, ſeeing it is the main *Hinge* on which turns the whole Scheme of *Chriſtianity*.) His Goſpel opens[f] with acquainting us, that the *Logos*, or *Word* (a Term often uſed to expreſs the ſecond Perſon in the ſacred Trinity) *was in the Beginning* (or from all Eternity) *with God*; that this *Logos was* moreover himſelf *God*; and ſo expreſsly the Author of Creation (which is alſo poſitively aſcribed to

[c] *See* Matt. i. 18. Luke i. 34. [d] Ibid. [e] Luke, i. 35.
[f] *See* John i.

ART. II. to him by all the evangelical Writers[g]) that *without him was not any Thing made which was made:*[h] The same Writer elsewhere declares it to be the express *Commandment* of God, *that we should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ;*[i] asserts that Faith to be the only Means of *overcoming the World;*[k] and in a Word, confesses that he wrote but that we *should believe on the Name of the Son of God.*[l]

St. *Paul* tells us, that *being* (before his Incarnation) *in the Form of God, he thought it not Robbery to be equal with God:*[m] And our blessed Saviour himself, so far from declining the Title of *Son of God* (as it is most certain he would, had it not been due to him by a most just and equitable Claim) confirms and vindicates it against those, who charge it as Blasphemy upon him;[n] openly asserts the Father and himself to be so much *one*, that *whosoever hath seen him hath seen the Father*;[o] nay, requires of some of those Persons who apply to him to be healed of any Distemper, that they subscribe to this Article;[p] and elsewhere expressly

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[g] *See* Eph. iii. 9. Col. i. 16, 17. Heb. i. 2, &c.

[h] John, i. 3. From hence arises that most conclusive Kind of Argument in Proof of Christ's Divinity, called by Logicians *Argumentum ex absurdo*: For if *all Things were* so absolutely *made by him*, that *without him* there *was not any thing made which was made*, it follows, that either Christ is no created Being, or else the Creator of himself, which is not only *absurd*, but impossible. Ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἐν οἷς τοῖς ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων γενομένοις ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ συναριθμεῖται, πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ γεγένηται ὁ αὐτὸς φησιν, Ἰωάννης—εἰ γὰρ πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο πῶς ὁ τοῖς γενομένοις τὸ εἶναι χαρισάμενος αὐτὸς πρὸ τούτων οὐκ ἦν. *Alexand. Episc. Alexand. Epist. apud Theod. Eccles. Hist.* l. 1. c. 4.

[i] 1 John, iii. 23. [k] Ib. v. 5. [l] Ib. v. 13. [m] Phil. ii. 6. [n] John, x. 36. [o] Ib. xiv. 9. [p] *See* John, ix. 35.

preſsly declares the Confeſſion of this Truth to be *the Rock on which* he would *build* his *Church*.[q] ART. II.

From all which it is evident, that Jeſus Chriſt is no created and ſubordinate Being; and, by Conſequence, of the ſame Nature, Power, and Duration, or (as one of our Creeds has it) *con-ſubſtantial co-eternal, and co-equal with the Father*.[r]

As will more fully appear from a Conſideration, to which he himſelf appeals,[s] *viz.* That many of his daily Works were ſuch, as were plainly an Over-match for any Thing leſs than Divinity; witneſs the Blind reſtored to Sight, the Lame made to walk, the Deaf to hear, the Dumb to ſpeak, and even the Dead raiſed to Life; and although each of theſe miraculous Operations was performed alſo by his Apoſtles and Followers, yet is there this manifeſt Difference, that he wrought by his own ſingle Power, with a Breath of his Lips, and in his own Name; they by Prayer, Faith, and in the Name of this their Maſter, the *Lord Jeſus*.[t]

We may obſerve alſo this further Diſtinction, that there was yet one (and that not the leaſt remarkable) Power reſident in *Chriſt*, which was never communicated even to the Apoſtles themſelves; *viz.* the Power of ſearching into the very Hearts of Men, and becoming acquainted with their moſt

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[q] Matt. xvi. 18. This celebrated Promiſe or Declaration, on which the Biſhop of *Rome* builds his boaſted Supremacy, plainly relates to the *Confeſſion* of *Peter*, and not to his *Perſon*—*Thou art Chriſt, the Son of the living God:* Chriſt replies, That on that *Rock* he *will build his Church*, &c. In other Words, the Profeſſion of a Belief in him in that Character, *viz.* as the Son of God, ſhall be the diſtinguiſhing Characteriſtick of his Church, and ſubſiſt as ſuch even to the End of the World.

[r] Symbol. *Athanaſ.* [s] *See* Matt. xi. 4, 5. John, xiv. 11. [t] *See* Acts, iii. 6. ix. 34. xvi. 18, &c.

ART. II. dark and concealed Reſolves, the very Moment they conceived them:[a] This, I ſay, we no where find to have been exerciſed by any *Man*, either Prophet or Apoſtle, and therefore it appears to be not only an Attribute (as is univerſally acknowledged) but an *incommunicable* Attribute of the Divinity.

Another Evidence we are ſupplied with from *Chriſt*'s ſolemn and authoritative Manner of Proceeding in moſt of his Miracles, which differ'd greatly from that of the Prophets, and holy Men of old, who acted as ſecond Cauſes only, under the Influence of God. *O Lord my God, I pray thee* (ſaith *Elijah*) *let this Child's Soul come into him again*:[w] Our bleſſed Saviour, in the ſame Circumſtances, ſaith only—*Young Man ariſe*;[x] *Lazarus come forth.*[y] There is evidently here much more of the Air of the Supreme Majeſty, than of any the moſt exalted of created Beings. God ſaid in the Beginning, *Let there be Light.*[z] *I will*; *Be thou clean*; (ſaith *Jeſus* to the Leper) *and immediately his Leproſy was cleanſed.*[a] *Peace*; *be ſtill*;[b] was ſufficient to huſh the moſt tempeſtuous Sea into a Calm: And *with Authority commanded he even the unclean Spirits, and they obeyed him.*[c]

Laſtly, that Kind of Worſhip which is called προσκύνησις *(proſkuneſis)* was frequently, and indeed generally

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[a] *See* Matt. ix. 4. xii. 25. Mark, ii. 8. Luke, v. 22, vi. 8. xi. 17. John, ii. 25. vi. 61, 64. xvi. 19. Wherever there is the Appearance of this Knowledge or Power in any other Perſon, it is apparently by Revelation; but in Chriſt it was abſolutely *ex ſeipſo:* He perceived τῷ πνεύματι αὐτοῦ, *by his Spirit* (vide *Mark* ii. 8.) *and needed not that any ſhould teſtify of Man, for he knew what was in Man.* John, ii. 5.

[w] 1 Kings, xvii. 21. [x] Luke, vii. 14. [y] John, xi. 43. [z] Gen. i. 3. [a] Matt. viii. 3. [b] Mark, iv. 29. [c] Mark, i. 27.

generally paid to *Chriſt*, while on Earth, and by him always admitted, without the leaſt Contradiction.[d] That this was certainly a religious Worſhip, is evident from the Collation of the ſeveral Texts of Scripture, which either prohibit it from being paid to falſe Gods, or enjoin the Obſervance of it with reſpect to the true:[e] And even from our Saviour's own Obſervation to the Devil, when he ſolicited it for himſelf; *Thou ſhalt worſhip* (προσκυνήσεις) *God*, ſays he.[f] It could never therefore be received by him on any other Score than that of Divinity: Not as a *Man*, for St. *Peter* refuſed it from *Cornelius* for that very Reaſon; *Stand up* (ſays he) *I am a Man:*[g] Nor even as a *created* Being, of a ſuperior Order; for when St. *John* (probably thro' Miſtake, not obſerving in his Fear whether it were not *Chriſt* himſelf who ſpake to him) would have paid it to the Angel, who attended him in the *Revelation* (and who was probably not one of the meaneſt among the Hoſt of Heaven) he ſolemnly cautions him againſt it; *See thou do it not*; and more than once orders him to *worſhip* (προσκυνήσαι) *God*.[h] From theſe Conſiderations it appears, that the true and genuine Foundation of Chriſt's being called the *Son of God*, is

ART. II.

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[d] *See* Matt. viii. 2. ix. 18. xiv. 33. xv. 25. xxviii. 9, 17. Mark, v. 6. Luke, xxiv. 52, *&c.* [e] *See* Exod. xxxiv. 14. Deut. viii. 19. Jer. xxv. 6. Apoc. xiv. 7. with many others. [f] Matt. iv. 10. Eſt enim κυνεῖν oſculari ſive Manum, ſive Genua, quæ demiſſiſſima fuit Adoratio—quoniam eoidem Corporis geſtus in ſacro quoque cultu uſurparunt Veteres, Vox illa προσκύνησις, quam Latini *Adorationem* ſunt interpretati ad animum quoque tranſlata eſt ad verum Dei cultum ſignificandum. Itaque cum *Moſes* (*Deut.* vi. 15.) dixiſſet *Dominum Deum tuum timebis, et ei ſervies*: Chriſtus in Novo Teſtamento dictum illud allegans dixit Dominum Deum tuum προσκυνήσεις. *Scultet. Exercit. Evang.* lib. 1. c. 57.

[g] Acts, x. 25. [h] Apoc. xix. 10. and xxi. 9.

ART. II. is on Account of his partaking the ſame Nature with the Father, and being himſelf very and eternal God.

To theſe Teſtimonies from the ſacred Scriptures I ſhall beg Leave to ſubjoin a Paſſage or two from the Writings of the firſt and beſt Profeſſors of *Chriſtianity* after the Apoſtles, which may ſerve for Inſtances of the general Senſe of the primitive Church on this important Article.[i] *The* Word, (ſaith *Juſtin Martyr*) *being the firſt begotten of God,* IS GOD.[k] *Know ye* (ſaith *Irenæus*) *that Jeſus, who ſuffered for us, and who took up his Abode among us, that ſame Jeſus is the Word of God.*[l] *Let our Accuſers know* (ſaith *Origen*) *that he whom we eſteem, and believe to be from the Beginning God, and the Son of God, is his own Word.*[m] *We ſay,* (ſaith *Tertullian*) *that he proceeded from God, and therefore is called the Son, and* GOD *by reaſon of the* UNITY *of Subſtance.*[n] To theſe we may add the Confeſſions of the orthodox Biſhops, in their ſeveral Councils, aſſembled to oppoſe the growing Hereſy of *Arius*, at the Cloſe of the third Century, which all run in the ſame Strain.[o] There

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[i] The Teſtimony of the younger *Pliny* in this Affair is not a little remarkable. In a Letter to the Emperor *Trajan* concerning the *Chriſtians*, who were then under Perſecution, written about 70 Years after our Saviour's Crucifixion, *They affirm* (ſays he, as he had collected from their Apologies, and the Confeſſions of the ſeveral Martyrs) *that the whole Sum of that* Sect *or Error lay in this, that they were wont, upon a ſet ſolemn Day, to meet together before Sun-riſe, and to ſing among themſelves an Hymn to Chriſt, as a* GOD. See *Euſeb.* Eccleſiaſt. Hiſt. lib. 3. c. 33.

[k] Apol. [l] Adv. Hæreſ. lib. 1. c. 1. [m] Contra *Celſum*, lib iii. [n] Adv. Gent. cap. xxi.

[o] We confeſs that there is one God; we acknowledge one Godhead of the Father, and of the Son: We believe that ſacred Aſſertion of Jeſus, *I and the Father are one*, to regard an Unity of Subſtance, which is the ſame, both in the Father and in the Son, *&c.* *See* Theodoret Hiſt. Eccleſiaſt. Book II. ch. 8. *See* alſo Book I. ch. 2, 4, *&c.*

There remains yet one Character of *Chriſt Jeſus* to be conſidered in this Article, which is that of *Lord* of us, or as it is expreſs'd in our Creed, *our Lord.* ART. II.

Now it clearly appears, that *Chriſt*, by Virtue of his divine Nature, has a juſt and indiſputable Right of Dominion over us, eſpecially as we are in a particular Manner his Creatures, ſeeing that *By him God made the Worlds*,[p] as is expreſsly aſſerted by the Apoſtle. But this Appellation is in a more eſpecial Manner due to him, in that he hath *redeem'd* and *purchaſed* us at the coſtly Price of his Blood, that we ſhould thenceforth become a People peculiar to himſelf; and we know that Purchaſe conveys a moſt equitable Right of *Dominion.* Well may we therefore call him *Lord*, who paid ſuch a Purchaſe for us; and gladly indeed may we liſt under ſuch a Maſter, who hath deliver'd us from the Hands of that hardeſt of Maſters the Devil, and the cruel and intolerable Bondage of Sin and Miſery. For theſe Reaſons it is that we call *Jeſus our Lord.* With reſpect to the Nature as well as Riſe, Extent, and Duration of this Dominion, it may be ſufficient to refer you to what hath been already offer'd on the Subject of *Chriſt*'s regal Title. Having therefore, as I hope, given a ſufficient Account of this Article, I ſhall now venture to diſmiſs it with a brief Review of the whole: From which it appears, that to ſay *I believe in Jeſus Chriſt, the only Son of God, our Lord*, is in Effect to ſay thus much:

I BELIEVE that there was once on Earth ſuch a Perſon as *Jeſus*, who was anointed, and ſent by God to procure for, and to declare to us the Terms

[p] Heb. i. 2.

ART. II. of Salvation; that he was moreover the very *Meſſiah* promiſed by the Father, and foretold by all the Prophets, and that he was, as his Name imports, truly and eſſentially the *Saviour*, or Deliverer of me, and of the whole Race of Mankind. I believe further, that this ſame *Jeſus*, who aſſumed our Nature, had alſo another Nature, by which he was truly and perfectly God, conſubſtantial, co-eternal, and co-equal with the Father; for which Reaſon, and becauſe he received all this by Communication from the Father, I conſider him as the *Son of God*; and as I believe no other Being ever to have proceeded from the Father in like Manner, 'tis therefore that I call him his *only Son*. Laſtly, I acknowledge, that by Virtue of that Price which he paid for our Redemption, namely his Blood, he hath an undoubted Right of Dominion over me, and the whole Race of Mankind; which Dominion ſhall continue in full Force over the World, ſo long as it ſhall endure, and after that over his Saints in Heaven, for ever and ever. And in this full Senſe and Latitude I believe *in Jeſus Chriſt, God's only Son, our Lord.*

ARTICLE

ARTICLE III.

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghoſt, born of the Virgin Mary.

ARTICLE III.

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghoſt, born of the Virgin *Mary*.

MATTH. i. 18.

——*The Birth of Jeſus Chriſt was on this wiſe; when as his Mother* Mary *was eſpouſed to* Joſeph, *before they came together ſhe was found with Child of (or by) the Holy Ghoſt.*

ART. III.

THE Words before us are a natural Introduction to the Explication of the third Article of our Creed, which runs thus, *Who was conceived by the Holy Ghoſt, born of the Virgin* Mary. The former Article gave us Occaſion to conſider the Divinity of Chriſt; this his Humanity.

It was promiſed to our firſt Parents ſhortly after their Fall, that *The Seed of the Woman* ſhould *break the Serpent's Head:*[a] But Reaſon will very quickly tell us, that no one of *human* Race was likely to make ſufficient Satisfaction and Atonement for the Sins of a whole World: To reconcile this, the bleſſed Son of God condeſcended to take our Nature upon him, and to become *Man*, in order both to pay that Debt for us, and the better to aſſure us of its being paid. Yet altho' it was neceſſary to theſe Purpoſes, that *Chriſt* ſhould take the

[a] Gen. iii, 15.

ART. III. the human Nature upon him, it was not abſolutely neceſſary that he ſhould put himſelf entirely, and in all Reſpects upon a Level with his Creatures: The Dignity of his Perſon and Character demanded ſome Diſtinction; and we accordingly find, that there was a very remarkable one made, in that he came not into the World by the ordinary Means of Generation, but was conceived in a miraculous Manner by the immediate Power and Operation of the *Holy Ghoſt*.

Notwithſtanding, however, that *Chriſt* received not the human Nature, or became incarnate by human Principles, yet did he verily and indeed become Man in all Reſpects, Sin only excepted, like unto us, *of a reaſonable Soul, and human Fleſh ſubſiſting:* He entered into a *Body* which was *prepared* [b] for him in the Womb of the bleſſed Virgin; with this Body was he born; this Body was nouriſhed, and increaſed in the ſame Way as thoſe of other Children; conſiſted of Fleſh, Blood, Bones, Veins, Arteries, *&c.* and was in all Points, as well in Stature as Subſtance, like the Bodies of other Men; [c] and as his Walking on the Waters, [d] Entering into a Houſe where the Doors were all ſhut, [e] and other ſuch like Circumſtances, were evident Proofs of his *Divinity*, ſo were his Sufferings, the Blows he received, his Scourging, his Crucifixion, and the Opening of his Side, of his perfect *Humanity*, at leaſt with reſpect to the corporeal Part; and certainly if he would ſo far condeſcend,

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[b] *See* Heb. x. 5. [c] In Oppoſition to the Followers of *Saturninus*, *Valentinus*, and *Apelles*, and that mad Sect the *Oſſenians*; the former of which maintained, that *Jeſus* had only a fallacious or fantaſtical Body, made up of condenſated Air; and the laſt, among other Extravagances, held, that he had an human but inviſible Body, not leſs than 66 Miles in Height. [d] Matt. xiv. [e] John, xx.

deſcend, as to be endued with this groſſer and leſs worthy, he would not omit the nobler, and more excellent Part of the human Compoſition, the rational and intellectual Soul, without which alſo he could not be perfect and compleat Man. ART. III.

We are to guard therefore, as well againſt the Error of *Apollinaris* and his Followers,[f] as againſt the Doctrine of thoſe who denied the Reality of the corporeal Part;[g] for the Incarnation was an Union of the two Natures, not a Confuſion, half Human, half Divine; each of them was entire and perfect in itſelf (which the human Nature cannot be without a Soul.) Then as a common Man is compounded of two Principles, which are almoſt as diſcordant as Divinity and Humanity; ſo the two compleat Natures of God and Man, by an Union ſomething like (but more aſtoniſhing than) that of the Soul and Body, became *One Chriſt*.

Thus was *the* WORD *made Fleſh*,[h] in ſuch a Manner however as not to loſe his former Nature, and have that wholly abſorbed and buried in Humanity, but continuing ſtill ſo diſtinct from it, as to be *virtually* ſeparable: For that the Divine Nature could ſuffer, and die for us, were an Abſurdity too groſs and palpable for the moſt clouded Imagination to conceive.

How neceſſary is the Belief of this material Part of the Article before us, to the conſtituting a true *Chriſtian*, may appear from the Apoſtle, who can give no better a Title than *Deceivers* and *Antichriſts* to thoſe *who confeſs not that Jeſus Chriſt is*

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[f] Who held, that *Chriſt* had nothing of the *Humanity* but the *Fleſh*, together with what is called the ſenſitive Soul, and that the Divine *Logos*, or *Word*, was to them in Place of a rational Soul. [g] *See* Notes [c] and [k]. [h] John, i. 14.

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is come in the Fleſh;[1] and propoſes it as a Rule for the *diſcerning of Spirits: Hereby* (ſaith he) *know ye the Spirit of God; every Spirit which confeſſeth that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the Fleſh, is of God; and every Spirit which confeſſeth not that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the Fleſh, is not of God; and this is that Spirit of Antichriſt.*[k] But to return:

The Fullneſs of Time being come that *Chriſt* ſhould enter on this State, *he was conceived by the Holy Ghoſt.* How! Conception we know is natural to the Woman only, and was morever promiſed to her by the Angel *Gabriel*;[l] and by *Iſaiah* to the Houſe of *Iſrael*, under *Ahaz*,[m] ſeven hundred Years before ſhe herſelf was born: And moſt exactly was it fulfilled, for ſhe both *conceived* and bare him; but this being effected by the Power and Efficacy of the *Holy Spirit*, he is therefore ſaid to have been *conceived by* (that is, by Means of) *the Holy Ghoſt.* By this Declaration all Mankind are excluded from a Right of Paternity over *Jeſus*; and he was (except in Name) no more *the Son of the Carpenter*, as his Co-temporaries tauntingly call'd him,[n] than of *Alexander*, or *Cæſar*, or any one now living.

The bleſſed Virgin was, it ſeems, *eſpouſed*, that is, betrothed or engaged, to this *Joſeph the Carpenter*; but before the Conſummation, or even Solemnization of the Nuptials, *ſhe was found with Child*; and as ſhe *knew not a Man*, as herſelf declares, and as no Woman could *naturally* conceive without ſuch Knowledge, Recourſe muſt be had to

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[1] 2 John, 7. [k] 1 John, iv. 2, 3. This Epiſtle is ſuppoſed to have been level'd principally againſt the *Ebionites* and *Corinthians*; who held, that *Jeſus* was a mere Man, and conſequently denied the Incarnation of the *Logos*, or Word.
[l] Luke, i. 31. [m] Iſaiah, vii. 14. [n] Matth. xiii. 55.

to ſome *ſupernatural* Means; which Means we find was the miraculous Operation of the *Holy Ghoſt*. ART. III.

There appears but little Room for Fallacy in the Caſe, as though the Mother of *Chriſt*, having been falſe to her betrothed Huſband, endeavour'd to deceive him with the Excuſe of a miraculous Conception; for we find that an Angel is the firſt Meſſenger of the News to him, when as yet he only conſider'd the Thing in his own Mind, and had not taken any publick Notice of it: And indeed Reaſon obliges us to conclude, that he had the ſtrongeſt Evidence for the Truth of it (this among the reſt) otherwiſe ſeeing how very nice and ſevere the *Jews* were in thoſe Particulars, (witneſs their numerous Laws relating to Fornication and Adultery, witneſs the many Examples of the Execution of them, in the latter Caſe eſpecially) he had not probably been ſo eaſily induced to receive, acknowledge, and ſupport both her and her holy Burthen.

Amongſt other Reaſons for this miraculous Conception, this ſeems one, *viz.* that we might be ſatisfied of the ſpotleſs Innocence of that immaculate Lamb; for not owing his Conception to human Principles, the Blemiſhes of human Nature affected him not: Beſides this, the Dignity of his Perſon and Character required ſuch a diſtinguiſhing Privilege; and this Privilege alone declares him to be far above the Rank of common Man: This Particular alſo having been foretold by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, and given as a ſure Sign to *Ahaz*, it thenceforth became a neceſſary Diagnoſtick or Token of the promiſed *Meſſiah*.

But from this Reſolution ariſes this natural Queſtion, Since all Mankind is excluded from a Right of Paternity over *Jeſus*, whence is he the

Son

ART. III. Son of *David*, and of *Abraham*, according to the fleſh? And how were the ſeveral Promiſes made good to thoſe Patriarchs? Briefly thus: Jeſus Chriſt enter'd into the World amongſt the Deſcendants of both thoſe Patriarchs, and therefore by thoſe, who allow'd him only a natural Generation, could not be deny'd to be the Son both of *Abraham*, and *David*, being *as was ſuppoſed the Son of Joſeph*, [o] who was lineally deſcended from them both, as appears from his Pedigree given us at large by two Evangeliſts: [p] This Honour 'tis true was only imaginary with reſpect to *Joſeph*, who was no more than his reputed Father; but the ſame cannot be ſaid with regard to *Mary*; for ſhe was his real Mother, and he received of her Subſtance in the Womb, as other Children do; ſo that *Chriſt* was deſcended from the Loins of *David*, as was promiſed in this reſpect, for his Mother was alſo a Deſcendant of that Houſe, and of the ſame Family with her Husband; and as it was always the Cuſtom of the *Jews* to intermarry with thoſe of their own Tribe (moſt probably for this very Reaſon, that by preſerving their ſeveral Families diſtinct, they might the more eaſily note the coming of the *Meſſiah*) this being I ſay their conſtant Cuſtom, it ſufficeth that we have the Pedigree of *Joſeph* though but his *ſuppoſed* Father; for this proves *Mary* to have been of the ſame Tribe and Family, which *Mary* was his real Mother.

And that ſhe was of that Family, is almoſt all we know of her; nor is there, as ſome have fancied, any Peculiarity in the Name, any Excellence adapted to her Character, for the Name was very common among the *Jews*; ſhe herſelf had a Siſter, who

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[o] Luc. iii. 23. [p] Matt. 1. Luc. iii.

who bare it, as did ſeveral others alſo her Cotemporaries, mention'd in the Goſpel; ſo that the only Mark whereby ſhe ſtands diſtinguiſh'd from the reſt is by the remarkable Adjunct to it (*viz.*) as ſhe is call'd *Mary the Virgin*; for ſuch we are told ſhe was both before her Conception, and after her Parturition. ART. III.

It appears by the Prophets, that this extraordinary Circumſtance was preordain'd to attend the Incarnation of the *Meſſiah*; and this Senſe ſeems to be fairly couch'd even in the very firſt Promiſe of a Redeemer, which was given to *Adam*; where it is ſaid *The Seed of the WOMAN ſhall break the Serpent's Head:* [q] For herein particular Reſpect is had to the *Woman* excluſive of the Man. Again, that Prophecy of *Jeremiah*, *The Lord hath created a new Thing in the Earth, a Woman ſhall compaſs a Man,* [r] was by the ancient *Jews* always interpreted of a miraculous Conception, and apply'd particularly to the Perſon of the *Meſſiah*: And laſtly that of *Iſaiah*, notwithſtanding all their idle Cavils, is moſt full and clear. *Behold a Virgin ſhall conceive, and bear a Son:* [s] for though it be objected by the latter *Jews*, that we miſ-tranſlate the original Word [t] which implies no more (ſay they) than *young Woman*, [u] yet we find it rendred, as we have done, by the *Seventy* (who were themſelves *Jews*) at the leaſt 200 Years before the Birth of our Saviour. The thing indeed beſpeaks itſelf; for that a *Woman* ſhould conceive (as doubtleſs Thouſands do every Day) is not Matter of Dignity enough for a Prophecy, nor carrying the leaſt Appearance of a Sign or Miracle, in which Light it was predicted to *Ahaz*. [w]

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[q] Gen. iii. 15. [r] Jer. xxxi. 22. [s] Iſ. vii. 14. [t] עלמה
[u] Juvencula. [w] Iſ. vii. 14.

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That thus it ſhould be, is plain then from the Prophets; and that thus it was, is no leſs evident from the Evangeliſts: Two of them (*viz.*) St. *Matthew* and St. *Luke*, are very particular in their Accounts of it; and *Suidas* tells us that the Circumſtance was ſo clear, and ſo well atteſted in thoſe Days, that at our Saviour's Initiation to the Prieſthood, at the Temple of *Jeruſalem*, Acknowledgement was made of it in the ſacred Archives. [x]

Give

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[x] As this Story, which has by ſome however been reckon'd among the *piæ fraudes*, carries nevertheleſs an Air of Plauſibility, and is one of the moſt remarkable Circumſtances, we meet with in the Hiſtory of *Jeſus* (excluſive of the ſacred Writings) I ſhall take the Liberty to ſubjoin it for the Benefit of thoſe, who have not an Opportunity of referring to the Author who recites it, to whom perhaps it may not therefore be diſagreeable—" There lived in *Jeruſalem*, in the Reign of the Em-
" peror *Juſtinian*, one *Theodoſius* a *Jew*, a Man in great Au-
" thority, with whom a conſiderable Banker, who was a
" *Chriſtian*, was much converſant and in Favour. This
" Banker one Day in Converſation obſerved to *Theodoſius*, that
" he much wonder'd, that he, being a Man of ſo much Judg-
" ment and Underſtanding, did not embrace the *Chriſtian*
" Faith, ſeeing that he could not but be ſenſible how evi-
" dently the ancient Prophecies were verified in the Perſon of
" *Jeſus*, and likewiſe the Predictions of our Saviour accom-
" pliſh'd ſince. *Theodoſius* reply'd, that it did not conſiſt with
" his Security and Intereſt to do this, but that he had long
" had a favourable Opinion of that Religion, and would diſ-
" cover a Secret to him, which he believed was not come to
" the Knowledge of any *Chriſtian*; which was, that one of
" the 22 Prieſts, who officiated in their Courſes at the Tem-
" ple in *Jeruſalem*, dying, *Jeſus*, who was called *Chriſt*, was
" by unanimous Suffrage elected in his ſtead: That it being
" the Cuſtom to enter the Name of the Perſon ſo elected,
" together with thoſe of his Father and Mother, in a Book,
" or Regiſter, and *Joſeph* the ſuppoſed Father of *Jeſus* being
" dead, his Mother was ſent for, who on her Examination
" affirm'd that ſhe had never known a Man, but had conceived
" him by the Influence of the Holy Ghoſt. Upon this the
" Electors

ART. III.

Give me Leave here to introduce an Obſervation which belongs perhaps more properly to the preceding Article, namely, that ſuch a Circumſtance as this, coming ſo well atteſted, is ſurely enough to tie down the Meſſiahſhip to the Perſon of *Jeſus*, as well by reaſon of its inherent Dignity and Myſteriouſneſs, as more particularly on Account of its exact and literal Conformity to the Predictions of the Prophets. And becauſe this Circumſtance ſtraightned the *Jews*, who were obſtinately bent on not receiving *Jeſus* for the *Meſſiah*, they had recourſe to the weakeſt and moſt frivolous Evaſions: For while ſome endeavour'd to deſtroy the Force of the Prophecy in general, by their ſtrain'd Interpretation of the Word עלמה (*Halmah*) (as I have above obſerved) others were for applying the Words ſolely to *Hezekiah*, not conſidering that *Hezekiah* muſt have been born at leaſt nine Years before the Prophecy was deliver'd; which lays a Difficulty in their Way apparently inſurmountable.[y] In a Word, the Collation of two very remarkable Prophecies ſeems to fix this Buſineſs of the *Meſſiah* beyond Controverſy: Theſe are,

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" Electors proceeded to a farther Enquiry, and finding by the " Teſtimony of ſeveral Perſons of Credit, that *Jeſus* was actu- " ally born of her Body, as alſo by the Report of ſkilful " Women, ſent for for that Purpoſe, that ſhe was yet in all " Reſpects a VIRGIN, they agreed to enroll him by " the Name of JESUS, THE SON OF GOD, AND OF " MARY THE VIRGIN; which was accordingly done. " And this Record, added *Theodoſius*, was preſerved at the " Deſtruction of the Temple; and may be ſeen at *Tiberias* " at this Day.—*Suidæ* Lexic. ad Verb. Ιησοῦς.

[y] *Ahaz* the Father of *Hezekiah* was King but 16 Years, and at his Death *Hezekiah* was 25 Years old: So that if the Prophecy were given as early as poſſible in the Reign of *Ahaz*, *Hezekiah* muſt be then 9 Years old.—Comp. 2 Kings xvi. 2. with xviii. 2.

ART. III. are, this of *Iſaiah* juſt mention'd, and that of *Jacob* on his Death-Bed in his Bleſſing to *Judah*.[z] The former foretells of the *Meſſiah* in the Days of *Ahaz*, as not yet come, and the latter determines his Coming to be before the Deſtruction of the *Jewiſh* State; for *The Sceptre* (it is ſaid) *ſhall not depart from Judah, nor a Lawgiver from between his Feet, until* Schiloh *come*. But this Power of *Judah* could not poſſibly extend beyond the Duration of the *Jewiſh* Œconomy; there at leaſt it muſt entirely and abſolutely periſh: And indeed it is clear to me, that this Prophecy is to be refer'd ſolely to this Period; and when it is ſaid that *The Sceptre ſhall not depart*, &c. it is not intended that the Regal or Supreme Authority ſhall be center'd in one particular Tribe or Family till that Time; but only that the *Jewiſh* Œconomy in general ſhall ſupport itſelf under all Oppoſition, and ſubſiſt till ſuperſeded by that higher and more noble Diſpenſation which was to be uſher'd in by the Appearance of the *Meſſiah*.[a] This however binds us

[z] Gen. xlix. 10.

[a] The uſual Method of interpreting this famous Prophecy ſeems to deſtroy the whole Force of it: For if it were accompliſh'd (as ſome on the Authority of *Origen* do contend) upon *Herod*'s Acceſſion to the *Jewiſh* Throne, then was the *Sceptre* actually *departed from Judah* before *Schiloh* came, whereas that Circumſtance was poſitively aſſerted to be poſterior to it. The Thing ſhall not happen עד כי יבא ἕως ἂν ἔλθῃ *Schiloh*, till the *Meſſiah ſhall have* made his actual Appearance. But *Chriſt* was not born till the 33d Year of this *Herod*, and by Conſequence not till more than 32 Years after *the Sceptre* was *departed from Judah*. By theſe Means one of the ſtrongeſt Evidences of his being the *Meſſiah* is abſolutely thrown away; whereas by carrying that predicted Period about a Century forward, and referring it to the Diſſolution of the *Jewiſh* State under *Veſpaſian*, *Jeſus*'s Claim to the Meſſiah-ſhip is not only made good as appearing within the limited Time, but all future Expectation is cut off, and all *Pſeudo-Chriſts*, or pretended *Meſſiahs*, hereafter abſolutely excluded.

us down to ſeek the Meſſiah ſomewhere between theſe two Periods, *viz.* the Reign of *Ahaz*, about 700 Years before the Birth of *Chriſt*, and the Deſtruction of the Jewiſh State and Œconomy, under the Emperor *Veſpaſian*, about 40 Years after his Crucifixion.

Now though it cannot be ſaid, that no one aſſumed the Character within that Compaſs of Time except *Jeſus* (for we find that many did, *Judas* of *Galilee* for Inſtance, *Simon* the Sorcerer, *Theudas*, and others) yet that he only came up to it, is evident on many Accounts; in him therefore alone are we to look for the promiſed *Meſſiah*, who as in all other Particulars of his Life and Actions he fulfill'd the Predictions of the Prophets concerning him, ſo did he alſo in this, and was the only Perſon uſher'd into the World in that majeſtic and myſterious Manner, as to be conceived and born of a pure and immaculate Virgin. For that the bleſſed *Mary* continued ſuch, even after the Birth of her *Firſt-born*, is evident, even from the Words of the Prophecy, *A Virgin ſhall* not only *conceive*, but alſo *bear a Son:* And ſurely the act of Parturition, though in itſelf inconſiſtent with a State of Virginity, is not more ſo than Conception. The Thing is clearer from St. *Matthew*'s Application of the Prophecy, who reads it, *A Virgin ſhall be with Child, and ſhall* bring forth *a Son.*[b]

It may be neceſſary to the compleat Explication of this Article, to obſerve further, that we conſider this Mother of the Bleſſed *Jeſus* as a Virgin not only before and after Conception, during and immediately after Parturition, but even for ever after, during the whole Term of her natural

[b] Matt. i. 23.

ART. III. Life; and ſuch as have held the contrary Opinion have been generally cenſured by the Church: For although there be no particular Mention of this, either in the Ancient or Modern Creeds; yet the Fathers thought it ſtrongly imply'd, by ſeveral Conſiderations; and therefore the *Greek* Church always ſtiled her Μαρία ἀίει πάρθηνος, and after them the *Latins*, *ſemper Virgo*; the *ever-Virgin Mary*.

The uſual Objections of thoſe who have not admitted this Doctrine were, 1. That *Joſeph* is ſaid not to have known her *till ſhe brought forth her firſt-born Son.*[c] 2. That this Son is call'd her *firſt-born.* And that, 3. The Goſpels make frequent mention of his Brethren. By the firſt, that *Joſeph knew her not*, &c. they would have it imply'd, that therefore he did know her after: But no more is intended by the Phraſe, than abſolutely to exclude the Co-operation of all human Means in the Conception of *Jeſus*, and to aſſert that *Joſeph* knew her not either before or during the Time of her Pregnancy, that the Whole of it might be aſcribed to the Efficacy of the Holy Spirit. If they yet urge that the Phraſe abſolutely requires ſuch an Interpretation, they may eaſily be convinced of their Miſtake by obſerving — that whereas *Samuel* from the Day that he rebuked *Saul* for ſparing *Agag*, *came no more to ſee him* TILL the *Day of his Death*; [d] there is equal Reaſon to conclude that he came to ſee him after: And again, whereas it is ſaid that *Michal the Daughter of Saul had no Children* TO (or till) the *Day of her Death*; [e] it may as rationally follow, that ſhe had Children after: There is evidently then no ſuch Force in the Phraſe, *Joſeph* knew her not TILL, &c.

nor

[c] Matt. 1. xxv. [d] 1 Sam. xv. 35. [e] 2 Sam. vi. 23.

nor doth it imply any Neceſſity that he ever knew her after, any more than before. ART. III.

But, 2dly, *Chriſt* is call'd *Mary's Firſt-born.* True. But that doth not neceſſarily imply a ſecond, *&c.* The Term is not always relative, but very often intends only to exclude a *Prior*, without Suppoſition of a *Poſterior:* Thus the *Firſt-born* among the *Iſraelites* was ſacred to the Lord;[f] but if the Term be tied down to this Senſe, then muſt they have waited till the Birth of a ſecond before the Conſecration of the firſt; and if it ſo happen'd that none ſucceeded, then might they have invalidated this Ordinance by a Quibble: The Abſurdity then of this Conſtraint on the Term is viſible. But, 3dly, We read in the Goſpels of his *Brethren.* True. But this ſeems clearly to be intended only in that general and extenſive Senſe, in which the *Jews* call'd all thoſe of their near Kindred by the Name of *Brother.* Thus *Abraham* calls *Lot* his *Brother*,[g] though he were only his Nephew, the Son of *Haran*, *Abraham*'s Brother; and there is hardly a more common Thing in the Old Teſtament than to find this Title given to collateral Kindred.[h]

[f] Exod. xiii. 2. xxii. 29. [g] Gen. xiii. 8.

[h] The Fathers of the *Greek* Church (who are follow'd alſo herein by *Ambroſe* and *Hilary* of the *Latins*) were of Opinion that *James*, *Joſes*, *Simon* and *Judas*, who were call'd the Brethren of *Jeſus*, were the Sons of *Joſeph* by a former Wife; but the later, and more probable Account is, that both they and their Siſters were the Children of *that other Mary*, the Siſter of the *Virgin*, and the Wife of *Cleophas*, and ſo only Couſins-german to *Jeſus:* Yet both *Greeks* and *Latins* are unanimous in excluding them from the immediate Degree of Conſanguinity. And that either of theſe Relations is ſufficient to juſtify the Appellation of Brethren under the *Jewiſh* OEconomy, is too well known to need any thing further to be urged in Proof of it.

ART. III.

There is then no valid Objection againſt *Mary*'s perpetual Virginity, and, for aught that appears, ſhe might be as pure and immaculate a Virgin after Parturition, as before Conception, even to the Day of her Death; and this being the moſt reverent Concluſion, the Solemnity of the Thing ſeeming to demand it, the Fathers of the *Chriſtian* Church have been almoſt unanimous in the Determination.

I am not aware of any Thing more neceſſary for the Explication of this Article: With regard to the primary Intention of *Chriſt*'s Incarnation, it was undoubtedly to qualify him for the due Execution of his high Offices of Prophet and Prieſt. But let himſelf declare it, *To this End* (ſaith he) *was I born, and for this Purpoſe came I into the World, that I ſhould* BEAR WITNESS OF THE TRUTH.[i] Again, *God ſo loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, to the End that all who believe in him* SHOULD NOT PERISH, *but have everlaſting Life.*[k] And laſtly, when on the Point of dying in an ignominious and painful Manner, for the Relief of a ſinful World, he acknowledges that, *But for that Cauſe came he unto that Hour.*[l] For the reſt, we have ſeen the Manner of the Conception and Birth of *Jeſus*; we have ſeen the Reaſons and Foundations of them: That he ſhould be born of a Woman, was requiſite to aſſure us of the Reality of his aſſuming our Nature, and that *he took not on him the Nature of Angels*;[m] That this Woman ſhould be a *Virgin*, in Reverence to the Perſon ſhe was to become Mother to; and both theſe to fulfill the Prophecies deliver'd on thoſe reſpective Heads.

It

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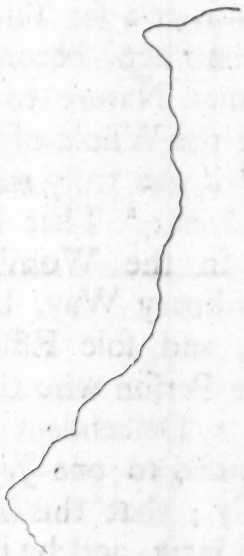
[i] John xviii. 37. [k] — iii. 16. [l] — xii. 27.
[m] Heb. xi. 16.

It is further neceſſary to add in our Creed the Name of this Virgin, that we may be ſatisfied of the Completion of the Promiſes, which had been made to *Abraham* and *David*, from whom this *Mary* was a lineal Deſcendant. I conclude therefore with a Review of the Whole. ART. III.

To receive rightly this Article then, it appears that thus much is requiſite, *viz.* to believe that that very Son of God, whoſe Divinity we before conſider'd, did alſo at a ſet Time, *i. e.* about 17 Centuries and a half ago) become very Man, by uniting the Human Nature to the Divine; that by thus aſſuming the Whole of the Former, Body and Soul, *the Word was* truly *made Fleſh, and came and dwelt amongſt us*: [n] That he was really and truly conceived in the Womb of a Woman; not after the ordinary Way, but by the immediate Operation, and ſole Efficacy of the *Holy Spirit*: That the Perſon who thus conceived him was one *Mary*, a Deſcendant of the Houſe of *David*, and eſpouſed to one *Joſeph*, of the ſame Tribe and Family; that this *Mary* was a pure and immaculate *Virgin*, and by the aforemention'd Power of the *Holy Spirit* was beyond the Law of Nature enabled to conceive; that thenceforth the Child grew, was nouriſh'd, and born of her in the Natural Way, ſave that, by the ſame Power, ſhe ſtill (and ever) continued really and truly a *Virgin*. And thus much we do (or ought to) aſſent to, when we ſay we believe in *Jeſus Chriſt, conceived by the Holy Ghoſt, and born of the Virgin* Mary.

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[n] John i. 14.



ARTICLE IV.

Suffered under *Pontius Pilate*, was crucified, dead, and buried: He descended into Hell.

ARTICLE IV.

Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried: He descended into Hell.

ARTICLE IV.

Suffered under *Pontius Pilate*, was crucified, dead, and buried: He deſcended into Hell.

MATTH. xxvii. latter Part of Ver. 26.

—When he had ſcourged Jeſus, he delivered him to be crucified.

ART. IV.

THE fourth Article of our Creed requires us to believe, that the ſame *Jeſus*, of whoſe Character both as God and Man we have had ſo extenſive a View in the two preceding Articles, *ſuffered under* Pontius Pilate, *was crucified, dead, buried, and deſcended into Hell.* I ſhall examine firſt into the Import of the Word *ſuffered.*

The moſt material Part indeed of *Chriſt*'s Sufferings was his Death upon the Croſs, which is particularly taken notice of; but if we would trace them to their Beginning, we muſt go back even to the firſt Inſtant of his Entrance into human Nature: For ſurely a Deſcent from a State of Deity to one comparatively ſo vile and low, deſerves that Name; and when the bleſſed *Jeſus* was expoſed to all the little Wants of Infancy, he might be truly ſaid to *ſuffer.* From hence let us follow him thro' the Courſe of his Life; we ſhall find it one continued Scene of Poverty, Labour, Perſecution, Contempt and Miſery.

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ART. IV. From the firſt Hour almoſt that he enters on his Office, he has Enemies, who lay wait for his Life: One while he is branded with the Title of Impoſtor;[a] anon he is rejected as a *Dæmoniac*;[b] his very Kinſmen and Relations ſcoff at him;[c] he is not only ſtrip'd of his Deity, but even of his Humanity, and made a Partner and Confederate with *Beelzebub*, the Prince of the Devils:[d] The moſt inveterate Enemies are reconciled,[e] the moſt oppoſite Factions united, to contrive and effect his Deſtruction: To-day he is aſſaulted by *Phariſees*;[f] to-morrow by *Sadducees*;[g] anon by *Herodians*;[h] ſometimes by all in Conjunction: One ſtrives to draw him into Blaſphemy; another into Treaſon; and when they cannot make his Actions tally with the penal Statutes, they endeavour to bring thoſe Laws to correſpond to his Actions: His beſt Words are miſ-interpreted; his beſt Actions vilified; and an Odium thrown on the moſt exalted Diſpenſations of his Benevolence. This is the uninterrupted Buſineſs of near three Years, and but a Prelude to his laſt Sorrows, which roſe to the higheſt Pitch of diabolical Malice.

Theſe are uſher'd in by the blackeſt Perfidy and Ingratitude; for one of his choſen Friends, one whom he had diſtinguiſhed from the reſt of Mankind, and picked out for his Companion, *who did alſo eat of his Bread*, offers himſelf a voluntary Inſtrument to betray him into the Hands of his implacable Enemies;[i] who, readily embracing the Offer, are by him led to the Place of the bleſſed *Jeſus*'s Retirement, where they ſeize him in a moſt rude Manner, as the vileſt of Traitors and

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[a] Matth. xxvii. 63. [b] John, viii. 48. [c] John, vii. 5.
[d] Matth. xii. 24. [e] *See* Luke, xxiii. 12. [f] Matt. xix. 3.
[g] Matth. xvi. 1. [h] Matth. xxii. 16. [i] Luke xxii. 4.

and Murderers. After being forſaken by all his Diſciples,[k] and by one of them thrice moſt ſolemnly denied,[l] he is hurried from one Court of Judicature to another; from *Annas* to *Caiaphas*,[m] from *Caiaphas* to *Pilate*,[n] from *Pilate* to *Herod*,[o] from *Herod* back to *Pilate* again:[p] His Torments are varied as often as his Judges; one reviles him, another buffets him, falſe Evidences are ſuborn'd to accuſe him of capital Offences, and in a Word they are ſo reſolutely bent on his Death, that with or without Law they are determined to effect it. A Wretch of the moſt infamous Character is preferred to him;[q] and in ſhort, after a moſt ſhameful Prelude of Taunting, Buffeting, Scourging, *&c.* he is at length led out and *crucified*; put to a Death at once the moſt painful and ignominious, and even there the moſt inhuman Methods are tried to heighten, if poſſible, his Agonies:[r] Such were the Sufferings of our bleſſed Saviour, previous to and attendant on his Crucifixion; and thus much are we required by the Words of this Article to believe.[s]

ART. IV.

The Certainty of the Facts requires little Proof, nay none indeed; for the Oppoſers of *Chriſtianity*, ſo far from calling them in queſtion, have rather taken Pains to eſtabliſh them: The *Heathen* Writers

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[k] Matth. xxvi. 56. [l] Ibid. 70, 72, 74. [m] John, xviii. 24. [n] Ibid. 28. [o] Luke xxiii. 7. [p] Ibid. 11. [q] *Barabbas*, John xviii. 40. [r] Matth. xxvii.

[s] It is neceſſary to believe all this of the very Body of *Chriſt*, as the only Suppoſition compatible with the ancient Prophecies, or the great Ends of his Incarnation; and to profeſs it, in Oppoſition to ſome of the wild Hereticks of old, eſpecially the Followers of *Baſilides*, who held, that *Jeſus*, as they were leading him to Death, diſappear'd, and the *Jews* crucified a fantaſtical Body (ſay the *Docetes*) *Simon* the *Cyrenian* (ſays *Baſilides*) in his Stead.

ART. IV. Writers give us the Hiſtory, the *Jews* triumph in it, and think they cannot caſt a greater Odium upon our Religion than by twitting us with the ignominious Death of its Founder.

Yet is a ſuffering and crucified *Meſſiah* expreſsly propoſed to us as the Object of our Belief, not only by the hiſtorical, but alſo by the prophetical Part of the holy Writings: Is he not repreſented as *A Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief*; as one whom Cares have ſo deformed, that we cannot diſcern in him either *Form* or *Comelineſs*; as one *oppreſſed, afflicted, wounded, bruiſed*, and even *brought to the Slaughter, and cut off out of the Land of the Living?*[t] The very Circumſtances attendant on his Death, delineated a thouſand Years before his Birth, and that too by more than one; the Writings of *David* and *Iſaiah* abound with Paſſages to this Purpoſe;[u] nor, which is very remarkable, were thoſe Paſſages ever applied to any other Character, except by ſome of the latter *Jews*, after *Chriſt*'s Time, in order to palliate, if poſſible, their obſtinate Rejection of him; but yet doth the 53d Chapter of *Iſaiah*, which is the fulleſt and moſt compleat Account of this Matter, carry with it alſo ſuch glaring Characteriſticks of the *Meſſiah*, as would render the Application of it to any other a moſt unpardonable Abſurdity; for what Soul, for Inſtance, is of Dignity ſufficient to be made the *Offering for Sin*,[w] ſave that of the *Meſſiah*? On whom can be *laid the Iniquity of us all*,[x] but on him who was ordained to be the Sacrifice for all? Surely on no leſs a Perſonage could be the *Chaſtiſement*

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[t] *See* Iſaiah, liii. lxxxviii. Iſaiah, liii.

[u] *See* particularly Pſ. xxii. xl. lxix.

[w] Iſaiah, liii. 10.

[x] Ib. 6.

Chaſtiſement of our Peace;[y] nor by any *Stripes* but *his* could we be *healed*.[z] ART. IV.

The *Jews*, by an evident Miſconſtruction of ſome of thoſe Prophecies which referred to the *Meſſiah*'s future Kingdom, and not conſidering by what Steps he was to be led to thoſe Triumphs, fondly expected him to appear at once in his Meridian, and flatter'd themſelves with a temporal Prince and Deliverer, who was to *reſtore the Kingdom to* Iſrael, and aggrandize the Houſe of *David* in ſecular and earthly Concerns; but our Saviour was very induſtrious in his Endeavours to eradicate ſuch a Principle out of his Followers: He takes every Opportunity to ſhew them the Miſtake, and to prove, that the Character of the *Meſſiah* was widely different from their Notion of it, and could not be genuine and compleat but by undergoing a Variety of Miſeries: He demonſtrates to them, and enables them to do ſo afterwards to the World, that according to the Prophetic Scriptures *Chriſt muſt needs have ſuffered*[a] all thoſe Things which we find were actually inflicted upon HIM before he could *enter into his Glory*: So that it becomes abſolutely neceſſary, if we will receive *Jeſus* as the true *Meſſiah*, that we receive him as in all other Parts of his Character, ſo alſo in that of a *ſuffering* and a *crucified Meſſiah*.

Nor indeed would our Caſe, circumſtantiated as it was at that Time, admit of any other; for had *temporal* Oppreſſors been the only Enemies we had had to cope with, a *temporal Saviour* might well enough have ſerved our Turn; but what would ſuch an one have avail'd us, when labouring under the Divine Wrath, and ſtruggling, *not againſt*

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[y] Iſaiah, liii. 5. [z] Ibid. [a] Acts, xvii. 3.

ART. IV. *againſt Fleſh and Blood*, but againſt the formidable Powers of Sin and Hell? Man had ſinned, eternal Juſtice required Satisfaction, we wanted not a temporal Redeemer, but one who, by becoming a *Curſe* for us, might redeem us from this bitter and intolerable Sentence. And ſuch an one found we in the bleſſed *Jeſus*, who *poured out his Soul unto Death, and bare the Sin of* THE MANY, *and made Atonement and Interceſſion for the Tranſgreſſors.*[b]

The determinate Time aſſigned for thoſe *Sufferings* by the Creed, is under *Pontius Pilate*; that is, during the Time that *Pontius Pilate* was Governor of *Judæa*. And for being thus particular, there are very good Reaſons: For, firſt, it tends much to the Eſtabliſhment of the Fact, a Thing ſo minutely and circumſtantially related not being half ſo much expoſed to Cavils and Diſputes as an Event related at random, and barely ſaid to have happen'd, without Specification of Time, Place, or Co-efficients: And we have not wanted Opportunities to make us ſenſible of the Uſefulneſs and Neceſſity of ſuch Particularity; for many of the *Jews*, finding their firſt Attack unſucceſsful, and that the Croſs was to us rather a Matter of Glory and Triumph, than Shame and Confuſion, alter'd their Scheme, and endeavour'd to deſtroy a Fact they had juſt before been as induſtrious in endeavouring to eſtabliſh; accordingly ſome, who pretend to give us the Hiſtory, have dated it eleven, others ſeventy, and others near ninety Years further backward than the common Account, as thinking if they could once unhinge the Circumſtances, the Fact itſelf might one Time or other come to admit of a Diſpute; but ſuch an Artifice is

[b] Iſaiah, liii. 12.

is foreſtalled by the Introduction of *Pilate*'s Name into our Creed; and therefore even this Part of the Article is highly neceſſary, and a proper Subject for every *Chriſtian*'s Belief. ART. IV.

It may alſo be obſerved, that this Mention of *Pilate* is neceſſary (ſecondly) becauſe he himſelf is ſaid to have borne ample Witneſs to the Fact, and to ſome remarkable Circumſtances attending it, as the apparent Malice of the *Jewiſh* Prieſts and Rulers, and the unblemiſh'd Innocency of our ſuffering Saviour:[c] And (thirdly) becauſe by his Means it came to paſs that *Chriſt* ſuffer'd in the Manner that he did, a Puniſhment which the *Jewiſh* Law was a ſtranger to;— yet ſuch as had been pre-ordain'd and ſignified, both by Types and Prophecies.[d] Crucifixion was purely *Roman*: Under *Pilate* the *Jews* themſelves acknowledge, that they had loſt the Power of Life and Death;[e] and by theſe Means it came to paſs that *Jeſus* was *crucified*.

It is next requiſite that we believe, that on the Infliction of this Puniſhment the Soul of *Chriſt* was ſeparated from his Body, and that he was, to all Intents and Purpoſes, *dead*. That his Sufferings were to be carried to this Height, and not ſtop ſhort of Death, was agreeable to both Types and Prophecies, and alſo requiſite, or at leaſt expedient on ſeveral Conſiderations. In the firſt Place, to fix a certain and diſtinguiſhing Mark or Characteriſtick on him, by the exact Conformity to thoſe Types and Prophecies. The grand Type of the *Meſſiah*, the *Paſchal Lamb*, was ſlain by a poſitive Ordinance: *Jeſus Chriſt* was but the Paſchal *Lamb*, *ſlain from the Foundation of the World*.[f]

[c] *See* Euſeb. Eccleſiaſt. Hiſt. B. II. c. 2. [d] *See* John, iii. 14.
[e] John, xviii. 31. [f] Rev. xiii. 8.

ART. IV. All Expiation by Sacrifice was with Blood; that Sacrifice therefore which was to include, and to exclude all elſe for ever, and to be made *once for all*, could not be compleat without Blood. Again, being the Author and Founder of a *New Teſtament*, it was neceſſary he ſhould die, becauſe *where a Teſtament is, there is neceſſarily implied the Death of the Teſtator.*[g] This, in ſhort, was the Seal of his Doctrine, the Ratification of his Promiſes; and without this his Satisfaction, and conſequently our Redemption, had been incompleat, and from that State of Condemnation but by his Death we could not have paſs'd into Life. Again, as *Chriſt lived* to give us the nobleſt Leſſons, ſo he *died* to leave us the brighteſt Example of Virtue and Piety; his Life was Love, Patience, Meekneſs, Charity, Humility; his Death the moſt exalted Expreſſion both of theſe and every other Perfection: His Death was alſo an irrefragable Proof of his Humanity; his Actions proved him God; his Sufferings proved him Man; in Conjunction they are indelible Marks of the moſt ſtupendous Myſtery, a Deity incarnate.

Here however we muſt pauſe a little, and conſider how far all this affected the bleſſed *Jeſus*: Far be it from us to ſuppoſe that God can die; that Immutability itſelf can ſuffer ſo great a Tranſmutation; or that *He*, who *only hath Immortality*,[h] could become mortal; The mortal Part alone ſuffered the Laws of Mortality;[i] the Divine was ſtill impaſſible, immutable, immortal; yet ſtill by

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[g] Heb. ix. 16. [h] 1 Tim. vi. 16. [i] Καὶ τοῦτο ἓν πέπονθεν. ἄλλ' ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὃν ἐνεδύσατο, ὃν ἀνέλαβεν ἐκ Μαρίας τῆς παρθένου τὸν ἄνθρωπον, τὸν παθεῖν δυνάμενον· ὅτε ἄνθρωπος ἀνηλθε. Θεος δὲ ἀπάθὴς. Decret. Concil. *Serdic.* apud *Theod.* Eccleſ. Hiſt. Lib. II. c. 8.

by a myſterious Connection firmly and indiſſolubly united to the Humanity, even at the Inſtant when (as we may ſay) the Humanity was diſ-united from itſelf. ART. IV.

On the Death of *Chriſt* follows his Burial; a Circumſtance both more material to be undergone, and to be ſpecified in the Creed, than may at firſt View appear to us: By the Circumſtances attendant on his Crucifixion, *Chriſt* had begun to compleat the Words of *Iſaiah*,[k] he prepared himſelf for the *Grave of the Wicked*; but by ſpecial Appointment he *made* it with *the rich*, being interr'd by *Joſeph*, a Man of the firſt Rank in the *Jewiſh* State, in a Vault purpoſely erected (or rather excavated) for his own Family.[l] But this Circumſtance was alſo a neceſſary Prelude to the enſuing Miracle, his Reſurrection: Had his Body been left to putrify on the Croſs, or thrown by in a negligent Manner, as that of a common Malefactor, the Story of his Diſciples ſtealing it away had been plauſible enough, becauſe they had then had ſufficient Opportunity; but this is excluded by his Sepulture: His Followers at this Period are weak, and few in Number, and the Body is ſecured, not only by the natural and artificial Strength of the Monument, but by ſuch a Guard or Watch as the *Jewiſh* Rulers thought ſufficient for their Purpoſe: Becauſe therefore the Circumſtance was predicted, and in itſelf ſo material, we are required to believe, that as *Chriſt ſuffered*, was *crucified*, and *dead*, ſo alſo was he *buried*.

The laſt Part or Portion of this Article is *Chriſt*'s Deſcent into Hell. It were needleſs, and indeed endleſs, to trouble you with all the whimſical Interpretations

[k] Iſaiah, liii. 9. [l] Matth. xxvii. 59, 60.

ART. IV. terpretations which have been put upon this Paſſage; for which Reaſon I ſhall content myſelf with barely hinting at one or two of the moſt remarkable, and proceed to propound that which appears to me the moſt rational, and which I think the moſt candid and judicious Expoſitors have agreed to fix upon it.

The rigid *Calvin* would perſuade us, that *Chriſt*, to compleat his Sufferings, actually deſcended to the Place of, and took Part in, the Torments of the Damned:[m] To which I can by no Means ſubſcribe; for beſides that no ſufficient Reaſon can be aſſigned why he ſhould do ſo, it is utterly impoſſible that he could; for he, who *knew no Sin*, wanted the perpetual Fire, the never-dying Worm, which join to conſtitute thoſe Torments; and ſeeing that he was certainly to quit thoſe Manſions of Deſpair in a very ſhort Time, they could not be Manſions of Deſpair to him, and therefore not a *Hell* in that Senſe of the Word.

We may further obſerve, that had the Soul of *Chriſt* been upon a Deſcent into *Hell* in this Acceptation of the Term, he would never have promiſed the penitent Thief,[n] by Way of Bleſſing, that he ſhould attend him thither; that had been more properly a Menace to the other, who added to his former Villanies by ſcoffing at him on the Croſs, and who therefore was more likely to accompany him in ſuch an Expedition; but to the Penitent he ſaith, *This Day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe:* Now though we may be miſtaken in the

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[m] Si Chriſtus ad Inferos deſcendiſſe dicitur, nihil mirum eſt, cum eam Mortem pertulerit, quæ Sceleribus ab irato Deo infligitur — cum diros in Anima cruciatus damnati ac perditi Hominis pertulerit. *Inſtit.* Lib. II. c. xvi. §. 10.

[n] Luke, xxiii. 43.

the other Word, ſurely we cannot eaſily err here, or ever ſuppoſe that Paradiſe implies a Place of Miſery and Torment; but, whether perfect or imperfect, at leaſt a Place or State of Reſt and Happineſs. ART. IV.

As groundleſs is the Opinion of others, that *Chriſt* perform'd ſuch a Deſcent to preach the Goſpel to the Inhabitants of that Place; for that Gulph is irremeable, and *where the Tree falleth there it lieth.*[o] With Reſpect to that idle Notion that *Chriſt* went into *Hell* to deliver from thence the Patriarchs, who were there detain'd till that Period; as it is certain they died in the true Faith of the Expectation of *Chriſt*, there is no ſufficient, nay, no probable Reaſon to be aſſign'd why they ſhould ever be condemn'd to that *Hades*, or Hell; or being once placed there, on what Score they ſhould then be releaſed from it. Or, laſtly, that he ſhould deſcend to exerciſe an uſeleſs, and in ſuch a Caſe vain-glorious Triumph over the Powers of Darkneſs, that having been already ſufficiently effected, when *blotting out the Hand-writing which was againſt us, he took it out of the Way, nailing it to his Croſs; and having ſpoiled Principalities*, and *Powers, he made a ſhew of them openly*, TRIUMPHING OVER THEM IN (or upon) THAT CROSS.[p]

'Tis certain then that *Hell* in this Article is not to be interpreted of the Place of Torments; nor yet ſimply of the Grave, in which Senſe it is ſometimes uſed:[q] But of the State or Place of Souls ſeparated from their Bodies, where they remain till their general Re-union at the laſt Day, and where in the mean while the Souls of the Virtuous have an imperfect Taſte of thoſe Joys, and

[o] Eccleſ. xi. 3. [p] Col. ii. 14, 15. [q] Gen. xlii. 38.

ART. IV. the Wicked of thoſe Horrors which are to be their reſpective Rewards, and the Conſequents of that Re-union and Judgment.

Into one of theſe States, and moſt indiſputably into that allotted to the Virtuous, did the Soul of *Chriſt* (not the divine Eſſence, but the human Soul, that which, with the Body, had join'd to conſtitute him very Man) retire at its quitting the Body, in order to continue there till the Time appointed for their Re-union; but becauſe that Re-union was very ſhortly to take Place, even within the Space of 48 Hours, juſtly might the *Pſalmiſt* ſay of him, *Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell; neither wilt thou ſuffer thine Holy One to ſee Corruption.*[r] Hither, I ſay, did the Soul of *Chriſt* retire for a while, that he might conform to all the Laws of Humanity, and be *in all Things*, as well in Death as Life, *made like unto us, Sin only excepted.* And ſeeing that it was neceſſary that the Body of *Chriſt* ſhould remain a while inanimate, to aſſure the World of his really undergoing the Ceremony of Death, agreeable to his own Predictions, and the primitive Laws of his Incarnation, and to lay a Foundation alſo for the Certainty and Greatneſs of the enſuing Miracle, *viz.* his Re-animation, the Soul muſt not only quit the Body, but alſo remain abſent from it a while, in which while it muſt be ſomewhere; and where ſo likely, as in that Place, whither the Souls of all (juſt) Men are received together at their Diſſolution from the Body.[s] I ſhall cloſe theſe Conſiderations

[r] Pſ. xvi. 10.

[s] By the Omiſſion of this *Deſcent into Hell*, in many of the Ancient Creeds, it ſhould ſeem as if there were not that myſtic Force in it, which ſome pretend to ſee; but that it were little

ſiderations with obſerving, that there is no particular Force in the Term *deſcend*, as though the Place whither *Chriſt*'s Soul went were ſomewhere beneath us, either in the Centre, or elſewhere within the Bowels of the Earth: To *deſcend* here is, in Fact, no more than to *go*; and whether it be by an upward or by a downward, by an horizontal or by a circular Motion, imports not; but as the Paſſing from a lower *State* to an higher, is juſtly call'd *Aſcending*; ſo may the Paſſage from an higher to a lower (as is certainly that from Life to Death) as juſtly be term'd *Deſcending*. Thus alſo it forms a beautiful *Antitheſis* to his future Elevation to Glory, which is elegantly expreſs'd to our Senſes by the Term *Aſcend*. ART. IV.

It appears then, that to ſay we believe in *Jeſus Chriſt ſuffering under Pontius Pilate, dying, being buried, and deſcending into Hell*, is, in Effect, to ſay thus much: We believe that this ſame *Jeſus Chriſt*, as already deſcribed, and received in the two preceding Articles, did actually *ſuffer* all thoſe Things, which are recorded of him in the Evangelical Hiſtory; and at that Time, which is ſpecified

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little more than a Corroborative of the preceding Expreſſions. For taken in this Light only, 'tis certainly a conſiderable additional Proof of two Things, *viz.* the Reality of *Chriſt*'s Humanity and of his Death: For againſt the *Apollinarians*, who held that *Chriſt* had not the Intellectual Soul (and of Conſequence that he was not *perfect* Man) it was uſed as an Argument that the Deſcent into *Hell*, or the Region of Souls, could not be perform'd but by the *Intellectual Soul*; conſequently that *Chriſt*, who (as themſelves admitted) did thus *deſcend into Hell*, had an Intellectual Soul, and was therefore perfect Man. And again, while *Chriſt*'s Soul perform'd this Deſcent, it was abſent from his Body, which of Conſequence was all the while inanimate; and ſo *Chriſt* was, as to his human Nature, really, and truly *Dead*; which is the principal Point of the Article before us.

ART. IV. cified in our Creed, *viz.* during the Government or Procuratorſhip of *Pontius Pilate* in *Judæa:* That theſe *Sufferings* were no Obſtacles to any Thing which has been before ſaid concerning him, but only conformable to ancient Prophecies, and true Characteriſticks of the true *Meſſiah:* That he cloſed theſe Sufferings (as to his human Nature) with *Death*; Death real, compleat, and of ſome Continuance; that during this State of Inanimation, his Body was interr'd, or *bury'd* in the Manner deſcribed by the Evangeliſts; and his Soul, his human and intellectual Soul, convey'd to the common Receptacle of the Souls of Juſt Men, not yet made perfect; that ſame Place or State wherein the Souls of other Men are, and do continue from the Time of their Diſ-union from the Body to the Re-union with it again. And thus much do we (or at leaſt ought we to) aſſent to, when we ſay that *Jeſus Chriſt ſuffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried,* and that *He deſcended into Hell.*

ARTICLE

ARTICLE V.

The third Day, He roſe again from the Dead.

ARTICLE V.

The third Day, He rose again from the Dead.

ARTICLE V.

The third Day he roſe again from the Dead.

1 Cor. xv. latter Part of Ver. 4.

——*He roſe again the third Day according to the Scriptures.*

ART. V.

So are we required to believe by the fifth Article of our Creed; which Article has held an undiſputed Place in all the Creeds from the earlieſt Infancy of *Chriſtianity*, and is, indeed, one of its moſt diſtinguiſhing Characteriſticks. And as the Fact itſelf was ſo material, that without it even the *Preaching* of the Apoſtles had been *vain*;[a] ſo is the Belief of it ſo neceſſary, that if we be Infidels here, our Faith, how extenſive ſoever in other Reſpects, is nevertheleſs fruitleſs and ineffectual. I ſhall open my Obſervations on this Article, with conſidering what is to be underſtood by the Term *riſing again*.

The proper Notion of a Reſurrection is this, that it is a ſubſtantial Change, by which that which once hath been, and ſeemed to be loſt (by Corruption for Inſtance) is reſtored in all Reſpects to its priſtine State. With Regard to Man, 'tis where the ſame Soul, and the ſame Body, which were diſunited by Death, are again united; where nothing is wanting to conſtitute an Identity of Perſon, but where the *ſame* Man is enabled to perform the ſame vital Functions, as before his Diſſolution.

[a] 1 Cor. xv. 14.

ART. V. Diſſolution. This is what we mean by a Reſurrection; and in this Senſe are we to believe that *Jeſus Chriſt* did *riſe again from the Dead.*

For we have already ſeen that he hath paſs'd thro' all the Forms and Ceremonies of this Debt of Nature, and was, to all Intents and Purpoſes, as dead as his greateſt Enemies could have wiſh'd him: Yet have we ſome Accounts of him poſterior to this Circumſtance, which are ſolvible only upon Conceſſion of ſuch a Reſurrection. But now we ſee him nail'd to a Croſs, wounded with a Lance, prepared after the uſual Manner for Interment, and actually depoſited in a Sepulchre hewn out of a ſolid maſſy Rock; the Entrance of the Cavity ſecured by a ponderous Stone, and guarded by a Band of Soldiers: And but now we find him again at Liberty endued with Life and Motion, eating, drinking, converſing, and performing all the animal Functions: For all the Malice of the *Jewiſh* Rulers, all their Arts, all their Caution was too weak; nor were the *Bands of Death* itſelf ſtrong enough to detain him, *ſeeing that it was not poſſible that he ſhould be holden of them.*[b]

But before we proceed any farther in the Conſideration of the Fact, let us firſt look back a little, and ſee what Reaſon we have to expect a reſtored and *riſing*, as well as a *crucified* and dying *Meſſiah.* St. *Paul* plainly ſaw a Prediction of this Event in that Paſſage of the Pſalmiſt, *Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee*; [c]and I think, excluſive of his Apoſtolical Character, few Ages have produced a Man, whoſe Judgment might be more depended on than his. But more plainly ſaith the ſame Pſalmiſt, *Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell, neither wilt thou ſuffer thine holy one to ſee Corruption.*[d] Now to uſe St. *Peter*'s Argument on the

[b] Act. ii. 24. [c] *See* Act. xiii. 33. [d] Pſ. xvi. 10.

the foot of Reaſon only, and excluſive of its ſacred Authority, 'tis plain that this is not applicable to the Prophet's own Perſon, nor could he ſpeak it of himſelf; for 'tis moſt certain, that he is both dead, and buried; as certain, by the Confeſſion of his Survivors, that his Body ſaw Corruption in its full Latitude, to an evident Tranſubſtantiation from Fleſh and Bones, to Duſt and Earth: We do alſo conceive that his *Soul* was not only *left in Hell* (that is, as I have explain'd it in the preceding Article, the State or Place of ſeparate Exiſtence allotted to human Souls, till the final Reſtitution of all Things) that it was not only left in Hell, I ſay, till his Body had ſeen Corruption; but that it continues there to this Hour, and ſhall continue till it ſhall be call'd upon at the laſt Day, to re-animate his reſtored Body. 'Tis moſt certain, that this Sentence or Expreſſion implies not ſuch a Reſurrection as the Pſalmiſt will hereafter partake in common with us all; but a ſpeedy, ſudden one; one which was to take Place ſhortly after the Diſſolution; as if he had ſaid, "Thou "ſhalt not ſuffer my Soul to remain in a State of "Separation from my Body ſo long, as that my "Body may ſee Corruption; but re-unite them "in ſo ſhort a Time, as that my mortal Part may "not undergo that common Law of Nature." Had this been true of *David* himſelf, we ſhould have heard of it loud enough, either from Friends or Enemies; and that it was not to be really verified in ſome Perſon or other, his Character forbids us to ſuppoſe. But ſince he is excluded, we muſt ſeek for this Perſon elſewhere, to whom we are plainly led by the very Terms of the Prophecy: It is *Thine Holy One, O God*; an Expreſſion equivalent to the *Meſſiah*, the Eternal Son of the Moſt High: *For David being a Prophet, and knowing that* ART. V.

ART. V. *that God had ſworn with an Oath unto him, that of the Fruit of his Loins, according to the Fleſh, he would raiſe up Chriſt to ſit on his Throne; He foreſeeing this, ſpake of the Reſurrection of* CHRIST, *that* HIS *Soul was not left in Hell, neither did* HIS *Fleſh ſee Corruption.*[e] And of him we do affirm it to be in all Reſpects true; for before full 48 Hours had elapſed from the Time of his Death,[f] before the Worm had ſeized upon his mortal Part, the divine Energy again united it to the immortal, in Bands which ſhall never more be diſſolved.

Thus are we prepared for, and led to this great Event above a Thouſand Years before its Accompliſhment; but the leſs obſcure, and more immediate Predictions of it are ſo ſtrong, and frequent, that unleſs *Chriſt be riſen*, nay, unleſs we do receive him as ſuch, we do throw on him the Imputation of Falſehood, and make him *a Liar, like unto ourſelves:* For it was his conſtant Practice, to the Doctrine of his Sufferings, to ſubjoin that of his Reſurrection: He taught his Diſciples, *that he muſt ſuffer many Things, and be rejected of the Elders, and of the chief Prieſts and Scribes, and be killed, and after three Days* RISE AGAIN.[g] He renew'd the Admonition ſhortly before his triumphant Entry into *Jeruſalem*;[h] nor was this a Promiſe made only to his Diſciples privately, but what he had publickly, and perhaps frequently aſſerted; for the chief Prieſts make uſe of it as a Plea to *Pilate* to procure a Guard to be ſet over the Sepulchre, *Saying, Sir, we remember that that Deceiver ſaid while he was yet alive, after three Days I will* RISE AGAIN.[i] When he bade them *deſtroy*

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[e] Act. ii. 31. [f] Comp. Matt. xxvii. 46. *and* xxviii. 1, *&c.*
[g] Mar. viii. 31. [h] Mar. x. 34. [i] Matt. xxvii. 63.

deſtroy that Temple, and he would build it again in three Days,[k] he confeſſedly ſpake of the Temple of his *Body*;[l] and under the Type of *Jonas*, he always prefigured his own Death and Reſurrection, as himſelf ſometimes explains it.[m] ART. V.

We may then venture to alledge with St. *Paul*, that *Chriſt* muſt of Neceſſity (that is, to fulfill the prefigured Character of the true *Meſſiah*) not only *have ſuffer'd*, but alſo *have riſen again from the Dead.*[n] Let us now ſee whether we may not with as good Aſſurance alſo alledge, that this Circumſtance was in all Points actually undergone by that ſame *Jeſus*, whom we have offer'd to us as the *Chriſt*. Firſt let us conſider the Teſtimony for it, and then the Validity of that Teſtimony.

The firſt Witneſſes of it were the Perſons who compoſed the Guard, who, as ſoon as they were recover'd from the Terror they had been thrown into by the Appearance of the Angel, fled into the City, and told the whole Tranſaction; but their mercenary Mouths were ſoon ſtop'd by conſiderable Bribes from the chief Prieſts.[o] Soon after came the two *Mary's*, who received the News of *Chriſt*'s Reſurrection from the Angel who attended at the Sepulchre, and a full Confirmation of it from himſelf, as they were haſting back to the Diſciples with the joyful Meſſage.[p] *Peter* and *John*, alarm'd by the Report of *Mary Magdalene*,[q] ran to the Sepulchre, where they had ſuch Evidence for the Fact that they (at leaſt one of them) *ſaw, and believed.*[r]

The very ſame Day *Jeſus* appear'd to two of his Diſciples, as they were walking to a Country Village

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[k] John ii. 19. [l] — 21. [m] Matt. xii. 40. [n] Acts xvii. 3.
[o] Matt. xxviii. [p] Ibid. [q] John xx. [r] Ibid.—8.

ART. V. Village a few Miles diſtant from *Jeruſalem*:[s] He continued for a while conceal'd from their Knowledge, but having duly prepared them for it by a Recital, and Explanation of ſuch of the Prophecies as related to the Event, at length diſcover'd himſelf to them.[t] The ſame Evening he ſhew'd himſelf to, and converſed with the Majority of the Diſciples;[u] as eight Days after he did to them all together.[w]

Theſe Converſations he renew'd frequently *by the Space of forty Days*,[x] and was, before his Aſcenſion, ſeen by upwards of five hundred Perſons at one Time.[y]

Theſe Things are tranſmitted to us by four Evangeliſts, two of whom were alſo Apoſtles, and Eye-witneſſes of the whole Tranſaction: But during their Lives the whole Apoſtolic Council, and, as we may juſtly ſuppoſe, the numerous Aſſembly of the Brethren, who had ſeen *Jeſus*, ceaſed not to aſſert it. In a Word, it was a Point ſo ſtrongly inſiſted upon, that *Feſtus* could perceive no other Ground of Diſpute between *Paul* and the *Jews*, than that they ſaid *Jeſus* was dead, and *Paul affirmed he was alive*.[z] Now the Matter is, whether we are to allow this Teſtimony to be good, or no.

Had the Apoſtles been artful, deſigning Men, verſed in Knavery and Sophiſtry; had they been Men of infamous Characters, ſeditious, turbulent, drunken, lying, Triflers; or could they have propoſed to raiſe their Fortunes (which, by the way, were none of the beſt) a Scheme inſeparably annex'd to Impoſture, and which moſt of our

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[s] Luc. xxiv. [t] Ibid. [u] John xx. 19. [w] — 26.
[x] Acts i. 3. [y] 1 Cor. xv. 6. [z] Acts xxv. 19.

our modern Enthuſiaſts ſeem principally to have in View, by the Invention, and Propagation of ſuch a Story; had either of theſe been the Caſe, I do not know whether I ſhould myſelf have taken their Words: But when on the contrary I find that they were in general artleſs, illiterate Men; Men as ill qualified by their Intellects to form, as by their Stations to execute great Projects; when I obſerve that they were, by the Confeſſion of their very Enemies,[a] ſingular Examples of Piety and good Life, irreproachable in all other Parts of their Conduct; when I conſider laſtly, that they never once attempted to turn the Scheme of Chriſtianity to their ſecular Advantage; that inſtead of ſtriking at Riches and Honours, they were only running on Infamy and Death; that they ſtruggled with Miſery in all its Shapes, rather than recede from their Aſſertion, and at laſt died with that in their Mouths, and for nothing ſo much, as that; when I have duly weigh'd all theſe Conſiderations, I find I muſt do Violence to my own Reaſon, as well as Injuſtice to their Characters, not to believe them. ART. V.

'Tis moſt certain then, that the firſt Aſſertors of *Chriſt*'s Reſurrection did themſelves believe it to be true: But might not they be deceived, and

[a] *Euſebius*, in his Relation of the Martyrdom of St. *James* the *leſs*, the Brother of our Lord, ſays, that he was ſo remarkable for his ſingular Probity, that the more conſiderate, even of the *Jews* themſelves, ſcrupled not to aſcribe thoſe Calamities which ſhortly after befell the City, to the Cruelties exerciſed upon that holy Man. *Euſeb.* Hiſt. Eccleſ. L. II. c. 23. And *Joſephus* himſelf has left this ample Teſtimony to the ſame Effect: "All this befell the *Jews* as a Judgment for "their Behaviour to *James* the *Juſt*, who was the Brother of "*Jeſus*, who was called *Chriſt*, whom they put to death, "notwithſtanding that he was a Man of the moſt ſingular "Virtue and Integrity. *Joſeph.* apud *Euſeb.* loc. cit.

ART. V. impoſed upon? Surely no; had they even been Idiots and Dribblers, which we know was as far from their Character, as Knavery and Sophiſtry; their own Doubts and Incredulity arm'd them againſt that: For they diſputed the Report of the Women, tho' offer'd in the moſt ſerious and ſolemn Manner: Theſe Things, when told to them, *ſeemed to them as idle Tales, and they believed them not.*[b] Upon this they have ocular Demonſtration; and becauſe that is ſcarce ſatisfactory, *Chriſt* ſubmits himſelf to their Touch;[c] He eats with them, drinks with them, converſes with them, and gives ſuch Proof of his perfect Re-animation, as extorts a Confeſſion even from the incredulous *Thomas.*[d]

Thus much is certainly acknowledged by his Murderers, that the Body of *Jeſus* was miſſing from the Sepulchre about the Time which was fix'd for his Reſurrection: Now could they have produced that in publick a few Days, or even a few Hours after the critical Point, it would infallibly have knock'd the whole Scheme on the Head. It is ſure they took care enough whilſt they had it in their Power to keep it ſo: But unfortunately all that Care was fruſtrated; in ſpite of all their Caution, *His Diſciples came by Night and ſtole him away.*[e] Stole him ſlyly out of a Sepulchre hewn within a maſſy Rock, whoſe ſole Entrance was ſecured by a Stone of a remarkable Bulk, μέγας σφόδρα, *very* great,[f] and cover'd by ſuch a Number of *Roman* Soldiers as the chief Prieſts thought ſufficient for their Purpoſe. Impoſſible. But the Guard it ſeems ſlept. What all of them? That is very inconſiſtent with *Roman* Diſcipline, as

[b] Luc. xxiv. 11. [c] Ibid. 39. [d] John xx. 28.
[e] Matt. xxviii. 13. [f] Mark xvi. 4.

as well as very improbable in itſelf. Beſides, the Buſineſs which muſt neceſſarily be done on ſuch an Occaſion, muſt have awaked ſome of them at leaſt, who might have alarm'd the reſt, tho' they had ſlept as ſound as Imagination can conceive. In ſhort, He muſt do more than ſleep, who cannot ſee the extream Weakneſs of this Evaſion. ART. V.

There lies indeed but one Objection againſt the Certainty of *Chriſt*'s Reſurrection, which carries with it any Degree of Plauſibility; and that is, the Smallneſs of the Number of thoſe who were the actual Witneſſes of it, and in particular, that he did not ſhew himſelf to thoſe who had been his principal Oppoſers. *Let him now come down from the Croſs* (ſay ſome) *and we will believe on him.*[g] Let him ſhew himſelf to us alive (ſay others) and we will believe that he is riſen.

But, alas, *If they will not hear Moſes and the Prophets, neither will they be perſuaded tho' one aroſe from the Dead.*[h] Had they attended duly to *thoſe Things*, which they had already *both heard* and *ſeen*, they had needed no other Proof that this was *He who ſhould come.*[i] In ſhort, there is but very littleReaſon to believe, that they would have received *Jeſus* at all better after his Reſurrection than they did before; for the ſame preſſing Conſideration which determined them in their Reſolution to diſpatch him, would not only have ſtill ſubſiſted, but have been greatly ſtrengthened. *If we let him alone* (ſay they) *all Men will believe on him*, and *the* Romans *will come, and take away both our Place and Nation.*[k] It claſh'd with their Security and darling Intereſts to confeſs him, He muſt therefore neceſſarily have been ſtill rejected.

[g] Matt. xxvii. 42. [h] Luc. xvi. 31. [i] Matt. xi. 3, 4.
[k] John xi. 48.

ART. V.

They had already been Witneſſes to three Reſurrections,[l] without receding an Inch from their Obſtinacy, Why then ſhould a fourth bring them ever the nearer to Conviction? Or, Why ſhould we ſuppoſe that they who made it their Buſineſs to bring *Lazarus* to the Grave again, from the Moment they ſaw him riſe out of it,[m] would have been more complaiſant to *Jeſus* himſelf? Would they not have renew'd, and more ſtrongly urged and inſiſted upon their old Argument of his Confederacy with *Belzebub?* In a Word, Would not ſuch a Condeſcenſion therefore have thrown them into the Way of adding to their former Guilt, (already weighty enough) and conſequently have been rather an Injury, than a Favour, without any one ſingle Advantage reſulting from it either to themſelves, or the reſt of Mankind?

With Regard to the Number of Witneſſes we have already a ſufficient one.[n] More, and eſpecially had

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[l] *Jairus*'s Daughter, Luc. viii. the Widow's Son of *Nain*, Luc. vii. and *Lazarus*, John xi. [m] John xii. 10, 11.

[n] If we may credit *Euſebius* (or rather indeed *Tertullian*, whom he quotes for it) the Thing was in thoſe Days ſufficiently atteſted to engage the Attention (and perhaps the Belief) of *Pilate*, who accordingly *wrote to acquaint the Emperor* Tiberius *with the Circumſtance, the Report of which was already ſpread over all* Paleſtine, adding alſo that he had *been inform'd of ſeveral miraculous Works, perform'd by this* Jeſus; *and that being* RAISED TO LIFE *again after his Crucifixion, he was already by very many Perſons eſteem'd as* A GOD. He adds, that *Tiberius* was ſo affected with this Account, that he propoſed the Building of a Temple to *Chriſt*, which was rejected by the Senate. *The Emperor however perſiſted in his Opinion, and the Continuance of his Regard for the Chriſtians*, ſee *Euſeb.* Eccleſ. Hiſt. B. II. c. 2. To this I ſhall add the remarkable Teſtimony of the famous *Joſephus*, a *Jewiſh* Writer, who lived and wrote within a very little while after the Affair happen'd. *There liv'd at the ſame Time* (ſays he) *one* Jeſus;

had they conſiſted of the leading Men, would rather have given it the Air of a Confederacy, in order to lay the Foundation of ſome Tumult, or to devolve ſome particular Honour and Reſpect upon the *Jewiſh* Nation: And had the *Chriſtian* Scheme been ſupported from its Infancy by the ſecular Arm, few or none could have been call'd upon to give that ſolemn and convincing Proof of its being no Impoſture (*viz.* the Sealing their Teſtimony with their Blood) and by Conſequence we had loſt one of the nobleſt and moſt affecting Arguments that ever was offer'd in its Defence;° and the World had ſaid of it, as we now juſtly ART. V.

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a Man of *excellent Wiſdom, if we may venture to call him a* MAN; *for he wrought many ſingular Miracles, and apply'd himſelf to the Inſtruction of thoſe who received with Candour his divine Truths. He had many Followers, as well* Jews *as* Gentiles; *and was indeed the* Chriſt *or Meſſiah. At the Inſtigation of our Rulers, He was by* Pilate *condemn'd to the Croſs; notwithſtanding which, his Diſciples did not recede from their Attachment to him; For* ON THE THIRD DAY *after his Crucifixion,* HE WAS SEEN OF THEM ACTUALLY RESTORED TO LIFE, *correſponding in this (as in other remarkable Particulars) with the Predictions of the ſacred Prophets. Joſeph.* apud *Euſeb.* loc. cit.

° I have ſeen it quoted, as the Saying of *Zeno* the *Stoic*, that he had rather ſee one *Indian* leap into the Flames thro' a firm Perſuaſion of the Soul's Immortality (as has been the frequent Cuſtom of that People) than to read a Series of the beſt Tracts ever pen'd upon the Subject. And certainly ſuch an Action were an Argument of a Man's ſincere Belief of what he aſſerted, which could not fairly be rejected. But this was the actual Caſe of the Apoſtles, and many of the primitive Confeſſors of *Chriſtianity*, who gave this ſolemn and convincing Proof, that they were endeavouring to propagate no more than what themſelves verily believed; and that the Motives which wrought in them that Belief, were of the moſt ſolid and ſatisfactory Nature: Otherwiſe they could never have carried their Zeal to ſo high and extravagant a Pitch, as is requiſite to make Men not only endure, but even to court and ruſh upon the ſevereſt and moſt ignominious Deaths.

ART. V. ſay of the Impoſture of *Mahomet*, *viz.* that it was propagated more by the Dint of temporal Power and Authority, than by Virtue of its own inherent Excellency and Truth.

There appears not then the leaſt Room for Heſitation or Doubt that *Chriſt roſe again from the Dead*, and that really and truly, by a proper Reſurrection, as it ſtands defined at the Head of this Diſcourſe; and that it was not any Phantom or Spirit in his Likeneſs, which appear'd to the Apoſtles, as they themſelves at firſt thought it was,[p] but a real Body, with *Fleſh* and *Bones*, which are not Properties of a Spirit.[q] Nay, further, the *ſame* Body, as appear'd from the Orifices in his Hands, Feet, and Sides, which remain'd from the Wounds he had received upon the Croſs; all of which, the incredulous *Thomas* did actually probe, and ſo receive the Teſtimony of the moſt infallible Senſe for the Reality of *Chriſt*'s Reſurrection.

There can lie no Bar againſt this Fact from the Difficulty of the Thing itſelf; for 'tis certain, that that Power which had ſo lately effected three Reſurrections, could not be baffled by a fourth. Now whether we conſider that *Power* as reſident in God the Father, or in *Chriſt* himſelf, the Effect will be the ſame. We, indeed, are to conſider it as reſident in both, and as the Reſult of that Omnipotence in which *Chriſt*, *as touching his Godhead*, is *equal to the Father*.

'Twas the Cuſtom of the Apoſtles to aſcribe *Chriſt*'s Reſurrection to the Father: *This* Jeſus *hath* GOD *raiſed up*.[r] Paul, *an Apoſtle*, &c. *by* Jeſus Chriſt, *and God the Father, who hath raiſed him from the Dead*.[s] Yet certainly ſo, as not to exclude

[p] Luc. xxiv. 37. [q] Ibid. 39. [r] Acts xi. 32. [s] Galat. i. 1.

exclude the *Son:* For as He had *a Power to lay down his Life*, ſo had he alſo *a Power to* TAKE *it up again.*[t] There was an inherent Efficacy in himſelf, which render'd it impoſſible for him *to be holden of the Bands of Death*;[u] therefore, ſaith he, *Deſtroy this Temple, and in three Days I will raiſe it up again.*[w] ART. V.

There is then no Contradiction between *Chriſt* and his Apoſtles in their Accounts of the Reſurrection: For the Power, which each aſcribes it to, is one and the ſame; ſeeing that *the Father* and He *are one:*[x] And to ſay that *Chriſt* was raiſed up *by God*, is in Fact no more than to ſay that he was raiſed up by the Energy of the Divine Nature, which is common to both Perſons.

There remains but one Particular more to be conſidered in this Article, which is the Time aſſigned for the Fact. *He roſe again* THE THIRD DAY.

By all the Accounts we have of it, it appears, that *Chriſt* died about the *ninth Hour*,[y] or Three o'Clock in the Afternoon, on the *Friday*, and that early on the Morning of the *Sunday* following he was riſen again from the Dead; which it is evident agrees very well with the general Aſſertion of the Apoſtles (ſuch as that in my Text, *viz.*) that *Chriſt roſe again on the third Day.* For when the *Jews* reckon'd the Date of any Tranſaction from any particular Day, they always ſpake *incluſively*; and that too with reſpect to each Termination, *i.e.* the Day *from* which they reckon'd, and the Day *to* which, always bore Part in the Number of Days the two Periods were ſaid to be diſtant from each other.

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[t] John, x. 18. [u] Acts, ii. 24. [w] John, ii. 19. [x] Ib. x. 30.
[y] Matth. xxvii. 46, 50. Mark, xv. 34. Luke, xxiii. 44.

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other. Thus Circumciſion, for Inſtance, was ſaid to be performed on the *eighth Day*, though but ſix Days actually intervened betwixt that and the Day of Birth. But more to the *Purpoſe* —*When eight Days were* ACCOMPLISHED *for the circumciſing of the Child* (ſaith St. *Luke*) *his Name was called, &c.*[z] though 'tis certain that the uſual Time was obſerved, which was indeed before eight Days were *accompliſhed*. And again, AFTER *eight Days*,[a] (ſays St. *John*) *Jeſus* appeared again to his Diſciples, though it were but (as we ſay) on the ſe'nnight of his former Appearance. But what Idea the *Jews* had of the Senſe of this Phraſe, let their own Rulers inform us, who only requeſted that *the Sepulchre* might *be made ſure until the third Day*, at the Expiration of which they were ſenſible that the Period they ſo much dreaded would expire alſo; notwithſtanding that they had juſt expreſsly urged, that the *Deceiver ſaid* AFTER *three Days I will riſe again*.[b]

We have indeed among ourſelves exactly the ſame Form of Speech: We call that, for Inſtance, a *Tertian* or *third Day* Ague, where but one Day intervenes; that a *Quartan* or *fourth Day*, where two, and ſo on; always including in our Computation the Day from which, and the Day to which we reckon. *Chriſt* therefore evidently roſe again the third Day (from his Death); the Day on which he died being one, *Saturday*, or the Sabbath, was the ſecond, and conſequently the Day following muſt be the third, on which (though early) he aroſe.

But *Chriſt* himſelf had expreſsly declared, that he ſhould be *three Days and three Nights in the Heart*

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[z] Luke, ii. 21. [a] John, xx. 26. [b] Matth. xxvii. 63, 64.

Heart of the Earth, agreeable to the ſo long Continuance of *Jonas* (his Proto-type in this Reſpect) in the Belly of the Fiſh.[c] How does this correſpond with the other Accounts of the Fact? We may remember that it is elſewhere brought as poſitive Evidence againſt him, that he ſaid *Deſtroy this Temple*, and WITHIN *three Days I will raiſe it up again.*[d] In a Word, upon a Collation of the Whole, the former evidently appears to be no more than a particular Mode of Speech, founded on a well-known Figure in Rhetorick, which we call *Synecdoche*, where ſometimes the Whole is expreſs'd by a Part, and ſometimes a Part by the Whole; as in the Caſe before us. ART. V.

I ſhall cloſe my Obſervations on this Article, with remarking, that this Event was the Ground of our transferring the Solemnity of the Sabbath from the ſeventh Day of the Week, whereon it was formerly obſerved, to the firſt; that at the ſame Time that we commemorate the Reſt of the Almighty after ſix Days Work, ſtill ſolemnizing a Day, the ſeventh from the preceding Sabbath, we may alſo commemorate that ſingularly happy Event, which compleated a Work, to which Creation itſelf, with reſpect to us, was inferior.

To conclude; as uſual, it appears from what hath been offer'd upon this Article, that whoever aſſents to it doth in Fact aſſent to thus much, *viz.* that that ſame *Jeſus Chriſt*, whom the former Article exhibited to us as *crucified*, *dead*, and *buried*, did not long continue in that State, but that he did really and truly *riſe again from the Dead* in the full Latitude of the Words, the ſame Principles of Life which had been ſeparated by Death being

[c] Matth. xii. 40. [d] Mark, xiv. 58.

ART. V. being re-united, and put in Motion; and the ſame identical Body, with all its Parts, as Fleſh, Bones, *&c.* being animated by the ſame Soul as before. That this Reſurrection took Place on that Day, which was the *third* from his Death, that is, that the two Circumſtances were no farther diſtant from each other, than from ſome Time on the *Friday*, or ſixth Day of the Week, to ſome Time on the *Sunday*, or firſt Day of the Week following. And thus do we believe, that *on the third Day* Jeſus Chriſt *roſe again from the Dead*.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE VI.

He aſcended into Heaven, and ſitteth on the right Hand of God, the Father Almighty.

ARTICLE VI.

He aſcended into Heaven, and ſitteth on the right Hand of God, the Father Almighty.

1 PET. iii. 22.

Who is gone into Heaven, and is on the right Hand of God; Angels, and Authorities, and Powers, being made ſubject unto him.

THE ſixth Article of our Creed exhibits to us *Jeſus Chriſt* as having compleated the Buſineſs of his viſible Appearance upon Earth, and now reſuming his former Glory, which he had for a while depoſited, and aſcending into Heaven, there to take Poſſeſſion of the higheſt Honours at the right Hand of God. ART. VI.

To the Expectation of this Event, as well as the former, we are led by the ſame Guide, the *Holy Scriptures*; as indeed it is highly reaſonable, that no Part in ſo high a Character as that of the *Meſſiah*, ſhould be paſs'd over in Silence, either by Hiſtorian or Prophet. For not to mention thoſe obſcure Paſſages, which nevertheleſs were applied even by the *Jews* to this Event,[a] let us turn only to that clear and pregnant Prediction of it, which the

[a] *Such as* Pſalm xlvii. 5. Micah, ii. 13. Zech. xiv. 4, *&c.*

ART. VI. the holy *Pſalmiſt* gives us in that Song of Triumph, contained in the 68th *Pſalm*, greateſt Part of which is prophetically addreſs'd to the *Meſſiah*; the Paſſage I refer to however is not fairly applicable to any other Character. It is this; *Thou haſt aſcended up on high; thou haſt led Captivity captive, and received Gifts for Men.*[b] The Perſon to whom this is addreſs'd is evidently the ſame, who is the general Object of the Invocation, *viz. the Lord*, even *the Lord*, who preſides *over the Chariots of God*, and who is among the Myriads of *Angels*.[c] Surely then they pay but an ill Compliment to *David*, who would introduce him as making ſuch a ſolemn Addreſs to himſelf,[d] which in ſuch a Caſe would become not only fulſome Vanity, but alſo glaring Blaſphemy: And as much do they exaggerate the Characters of *Moſes*,[e] and *Joſhua*, who would raiſe them to Honours received for, and belonging only to the ſacred Character of the *Meſſiah*. For which of all theſe *aſcended* thus *on high?* Which of all theſe carried his Triumph to the Gates of Heaven, and led in Chains the Powers of Sin and Death, which had reduced all Things elſe to their Subjection? Or was Advocate powerful enough to obtain ſo high and valuable *Gifts for Men*, that even *the Lord God ſhould dwell among them?*[f] We may obſerve further, that to include even *the Rebellious*[g] in the Bleſſing, is hardly ſo analagous to any Diſpenſer of the *Jewiſh* Œconomy, which was formed on a ſeverer Model, as to him, whoſe Doctrine and whoſe Life breathed nothing but Love and Pardon; and whoſe very Miſſion was founded on our *Rebellion* and Diſobedience.

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[b] Pſalm lxviii. 18. [c] Ib. 17. [d] *Aben Ezra*, a *Jewiſh* Commentator. [e] Author of the *Chaldee* Paraphraſe.
[f] Pſalm xviii. 18. [g] Ibid.

ART. VI.

It was certainly at a Time alſo, when his Heart was elated with the clear, though diſtant Proſpect of this great Event, that the ſame Divine Author broke out into thoſe exalted Strains of Triumph, not unworthy the Tongues and Harps of Angels, *Lift up your Heads O ye Gates, and be ye lift up ye everlaſting Doors, and the King of Glory ſhall come in*, &c. at the Cloſe of the xxivth *Pſalm*.[h]

Jeſus himſelf however expreſsly taught his Diſciples to expect this Event, as well before his Crucifixion as after his Reſurrection. When his exhibiting himſelf to them as *Bread, which came down from Heaven*,[i] cauſed among them a murmuring: What, ſays he, *Doth this offend you?* What then will ye ſay when ye ſhall *ſee the Son of Man aſcend up where he was before?* Towards the Cloſe of his Miniſtry he was in this (as in other Things) more full and particular; and not only declared the Aſcent, but explained alſo the Reaſons for which it was neceſſary; and in order to conſole them for the Loſs of him, which they always heard mentioned with the greateſt Regret, he acquainted them with the Benefits which would accrue to them from that Circumſtance.[k]

Beſides theſe there was (as we may ſay) a conſtant and ſtanding Prophecy of the Aſcenſion of *Chriſt*. For I think a Type may (not improperly) be ſo called; and 'tis certain, that the ſolemn Entrance of the High-Prieſt into the *Holy of Holies*, was a Type of this: For ſo is it expreſsly conſtrued by St. *Paul*.[l] It was indeed the ſettled Notion of the *Jews*, that the Body of the Tabernacle was an Emblem of this lower World, and the *Holy of Holies*, where reſted the *Shechinah*, of Heaven,

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[h] From Ver. 7. to the End. [i] John, vi. 61.
[k] John, xvi. 5, 6. [l] Heb. ix. 11. 12.

ART. VI. ven, or the Heaven of Heavens. As therefore the *Jewiſh* High-Prieſt having offer'd the propitiatory Sacrifice, did enter into this Emblem of Heaven, ſo was this our High-Prieſt, after having offer'd up the great Sacrifice of himſelf, to enter into the real Reſidence of the true *Shechinah*, to make continual Interceſſion for his People.

It appears then, both from Types and Prophecies, that this was to be one Characteriſtick of the true *Meſſiah*. And as clearly doth it appear from Hiſtory, that that ſame *Jeſus*, whom we have already ſeen in ſo many other Parts of that Character, *who died for our Sins according to the Scriptures, and was buried, and roſe again the third Day according to the Scriptures*;[m] that ſame *Jeſus*, I ſay, did not leave thoſe Scriptures unfulfilled in this Part, but did really and truly aſcend into Heaven alſo.

From St. *Mark* we have, that [n] *after the Lord had ſpoken unto them, he was received up into Heaven, and ſat on the right Hand of God.* [o] *While he bleſſed them* (ſaith St. *Luke*) *he was parted from them, and carried up into Heaven.* And again the ſame Apoſtle, in another Place, [p] *When he had ſpoken theſe Things, even while they beheld, he was taken up, and a Cloud received him out of their Sight.* How many of the Diſciples were actually preſent at this Circumſtance, is not certain; we may however depend upon the whole Company of the Apoſtles, then reduced by the Defection of *Judas* to eleven; but it is not improbable that there were preſent alſo others, of the Number of thoſe to whom *Jeſus had ſhewn himſelf alive after his Paſſion.* Certain it is, that theſe, as well as the Apoſtles,

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[m] 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4. [n] Mark, xvi. 19. [o] Luke, xxiv. 52.
[p] Acts, i. 9.

Apoſtles ceaſed not to aſſert it with equal Confidence, as they had done the Reſurrection; and their Teſtimony in this Reſpect has as juſt a Title to our Regard as in the Caſe of the Reſurrection, where I think I have ſhewn it cannot fairly or reaſonably be rejected. With regard to their own Knowledge of the Fact, they were undoubtedly very clear in it; nor could they be otherwiſe, having had the ſtrongeſt Evidence in Proof of it, which could poſſibly be given or expected, even ocular Demonſtration: It was performed in the Preſence of them all; even while their Eyes were wholly intent upon him, which was more than they had been allowed, and more indeed than was neceſſary in the Caſe of the Reſurrection; for, to ſee a Perſon *really* alive, whom they knew to have been *really* dead, was Proof ſufficient: But as they were not to have that Evidence of his Aſcenſion, it was neceſſary they ſhould have one equivalent to it; and as they had been aſſured of the Certainty of the Reſurrection from ſome certain Conſequences of it, ſo they might be ſatisfied of the Aſcenſion by being Eye-witneſſes to the Thing itſelf. ART. VI.

Nor could they be deceived by *Jeſus*'s rendering himſelf inviſible, as he had formerly done on the Hill of *Nazareth*, to avoid the Perfidy of his Countrymen;[q] and again in the Temple, when the *Jews* were on the Point of ſtoning him:[r] They could not, I ſay, be deceived thus here, and ſo miſſing him on a ſudden take it into their Heads that he was aſcended up into Heaven; for they ſaw him, their Eyes were intent upon him, and their Sight traced him through the Regions of the

[q] Luke, iv. 30. [r] John, viii. 59.

ART. VI. Air, ſtill gazing after him, even after the Doors of Heaven were ſhut upon him, and the intervening Clouds cut off their further Proſpect. And that nothing might be wanting to their Satisfaction, they received Information of what paſſed afterwards, from the Inhabitants of thoſe Regions wherein *Chriſt* was then received: For *while they yet looked ſtedfaſtly towards Heaven, behold two Men ſtood by them in white Apparel, who alſo ſaid, Ye Men of* Galilee, *why ſtand ye gazing up into Heaven? This ſame Jeſus, who is* taken up *from you* into Heaven, *ſhall ſo come in like Manner as ye have ſeen him go into Heaven.*[s]

Thoſe who were preſent then had ſatisfactory Proof of *Chriſt*'s Aſcenſion; and St. *Luke*, from whom we have this Account, might not improbably be of that Number, being certainly one of thoſe ſeventy Diſciples whom *Jeſus* himſelf had commiſſioned;[t] and moſt likely one of thoſe five hundred Brethren, to whom *Jeſus* is ſaid to have appeared at one Time[u] after his Reſurrection. Add to this, that he wrote under the Eye of St. *Paul*, and that his Writings were allowed, if not inſpected, by all the ſurviving Apoſtles. With regard to St. *Mark*, beſide the Probability of his having been himſelf an Eye-witneſs of *Chriſt*'s Aſcenſion, for the ſame Reaſons already urged in Favour of St. *Luke*, he wrote profeſſedly under the Direction of St. *Peter*, who at leaſt was ſo beyond all Diſpute, and who has confirmed that Evangeliſt's Account by his own ſolemn Teſtimony.[w]

But there are two Evidences for the Truth of this Article, who well deſerve our Attention: Theſe

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[s] Acts, i. 10, 11. [t] Luke, x. 1. [u] 1 Cor. xv. 6.
[w] 1 Pet. iii. 22, &c.

Theſe are St. *Stephen* and St. *Paul*. St. *Stephen*'s Eye penetrated further than thoſe of the Apoſtles had done at the Time of the Aſcenſion, and ſaw it in its full Effect: The Doors of Heaven were opened to him, and he ſaw the *Son of Man*[x] actually in Poſſeſſion of that Throne, to receive which was one End of his Aſcenſion: For ſurely had not *Stephen* been indeed thus honour'd, he would never have pull'd immediate Martyrdom upon his Head, by ſuch an uſeleſs Aſſertion; the Laws againſt Blaſphemy (in which Light that Aſſertion was conſider'd) were too rigid in themſelves, and too ſeverely executed, for a Man to think of trifling in that Way; nor, on the other hand, could the Viſion be merely imaginary, and the Effect of *Delirium*: For ſo ſudden a Tranſition from a Courſe of ſedate, ſtrong, and well digeſted Argument, to Infatuation and Madneſs, cannot well be ſuppoſed; ſo that *Stephen* muſt undoubtedly be allow'd to be both a competent Judge, and a credible Witneſs. ART. VI.

St. *Paul* gives us the ſtrongeſt Reaſon in the World to believe, that he himſelf was favoured in the like Manner, and that too more than once.[y] And to ſay Truth, an Evidence of a very ſingular Nature ſeems to have been requiſite to effect ſo ſudden and ſo ſurpriſing a Revolution, as that he who ſet out from *Jeruſalem*, *breathing out* nothing but *Slaughter* and Perſecution, ſhould enter into *Damaſcus*[z] a determined Confeſſor; ſo great a Change, as that he, who was yet wet with the Blood of the firſt (and then only) Martyr, ſhould become the moſt ſtrenuous Aſſertor of thoſe very Doctrines which had drawn from him his Suffrage againſt St. *Stephen*.

[x] Acts, vii. 55. Acts xxii. xxvi. *See* alſo 1 Cor. ix. 1. —xv. 8. —2 Cor. xii.

[y] *See* his Account of his Converſion,

[z] *See* Acts ix.

ART. VI. To this, if we add the exact Accompliſhment of thoſe Events, which were profeſſedly to be the Conſequents on ſuch Aſcenſion (particularly the Effuſion of the Holy Spirit, which took place about ten Days after it) we can no longer heſitate to believe, that *Jeſus Chriſt* did actually aſcend into Heaven.

He aſcended by a true local Motion: It was not his Divinity which took its Flight, in order to return to Heaven; for that, being omnipreſent, or filling all Space, could not be ſubject to the Imperfection of local Motion; that needed not to aſcend into Heaven, where it was always reſident; nor could it quit the Earth, in every Corner of which it is ſtill preſent: But it was his *Humanity*; that Part of him which was made up of a Body and a Soul; which not being endued with this Perfection, was capable of, and required, and therefore performed a true, literal, and local Aſcent. It was furthermore that Body, with which his Diſciples had ſeen him cloathed after his Reſurrection, with which they had eaten, drank, and converſed; that Body, in reſpect of which only Chriſt can be ſaid to have been *lower than the Angels*,[a] which was now to have *Angels, and Authorities, and Powers, made ſubject unto it*;[b] to all of which, in reſpect of his Divinity, he had been ſuperior from all Eternity.

Far be it from us then to ſuppoſe, with ſome of the wild Hereticks of old, that when *Chriſt* aſcended into Heaven his Body was diſſolved, and diſperſed among the Elements; or that he left it in

[a] Heb. ii. 7. [b] 1 Pet. iii. 22.

in the Sun;[c] or in ſhort, any where on this Side Heaven: For then had we wanted that Proof of the Capacity of our Nature, for being received into Heaven, which we are now taught to glory in; then had it not been the Man *Chriſt Jeſus*, but the divine, diſembody'd *Logos*, which had aſcended; and not the *Son of Man*, but the inviſible God (whom *no Man hath ſeen at any Time*) who appeared to St. *Stephen*: Both of which imply the moſt glaring Abſurdities; for ſo had Inviſibility become viſible, and that been moved which was incapable of Motion. ART. VI.

Laſtly, as the Term *Heaven* is capable of different Acceptations, it is neceſſary to add, that it was undoubtedly the higheſt Heaven, or what the *Jews* called the *Heaven of Heavens* (the Anti-type of the *Holy of Holies*) into which *Jeſus* aſcended. The Courts of *Angels*, and of *Authorities* and *Powers*, he paſſed through, being now to be far exalted above them all, and to *aſcend up where he was before*;[d] to enjoy the ſame Place in his *Humanity* he had for ever done in his Divinity; and to be inveſted, as *God-Man*, with *that Glory*, which ſimply as God he ſhared with the Father *before the World was*.[e] In a Word, whatſoever Heaven is higher than all the reſt, which are called Heavens; whatſoever Sanctuary is holier than all,

[c] One of the principal Tenets of *Apelles*, who appear'd at the Head of a Sect of Hereticks, about the Year of our Lord 180, was, that *Jeſus* had a Body compoſed only of condenſated Air, which reverted upon his Aſcenſion to its primitive State and Form. About ten Years after appear'd *Hermias* and *Selencus*, who aſſerted, that the Body of Chriſt was depoſited in the Sun; which laſt was alſo partly the Doctrine of *Manes*, Founder of the Sect of the *Manichees*, about the Year 277.

[d] John, vi. 62. [e] John, xvii. 5.

ART. VI. which are called *Holies*; whatſoever Place is of greateſt Dignity in thoſe Courts above, and will admit of being called the moſt immediate Reſidence of the Almighty Father, thither did *Jeſus* aſcend, and *ſat for ever down on the right Hand of God; from thenceforth expecting till his Enemies be made his Footſtool.*[f]

Before I paſs to the Conſideration of this ſecond Branch of the Article before us, I think it will be neceſſary to make a ſhort Enquiry into the ſeveral Ends and Reaſons for *Chriſt*'s aſcending into Heaven in that State, Form and Manner, in which we have deſcribed and explain'd it: For were not all the Purpoſes of the Incarnation already anſwer'd? Had not his Body done all that was required from it? And might he not therefore now have ſhaken off that mortal Part, and reſumed the God entire? *Chriſt* had compleated his Miniſtry on Earth; he had laid a ſolid and immoveable Foundation for the Eſtabliſhment of his future Church; he had appointed proper Subſtitutes; given them full Inſtructions; inveſted them with the neceſſary Authority; propoſed the entire Conditions of his new Diſpenſation; back'd it with the neceſſary Sanctions; fully *brought to Light Life and Immortality*,[g] and compleated the whole Buſineſs of a Prophet and a Law-giver.

As a Prieſt, he had offer'd up for us the full and ſatisfactory Sacrifice, and paid the Debt due from Diſobedience to incenſed Majeſty; had redeemed us from the Curſe which hung over us, by becoming *a Curſe for us*;[h] and *by his Death reconciled us* to his Father, and cauſed us *to paſs from Death to Life*.[i] He had furthermore given that

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[f] Heb. x. 13. [g] 2 Tim. i. 10. [h] Galat. iii. 13. [i] John, v. 24.

that moſt ample and affecting Proof of his own Power and Veracity, and of the Truth of his Divine Legation; that evident Demonſtration, that *the Chains of Death were too weak to hold him,*[k] *viz.* the Reſumption of his Body, after three Days Separation from it; after having done all this, might he not, I ſay, have laid aſide that Body, as having now no further Uſe for it? ART. VI.

No: For as in that Form he had gone through all the various Scenes of his Humiliation, in that Form was he to reap the promiſed Reward of it. *Being found in Faſhion as a Man, he had humbled himſelf, and become obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Croſs*; *wherefore* (in Faſhion of a Man) was he now to be *highly exalted*, and to be ſet at God's *right Hand in heavenly Places, far above all Principality, and Power, and Might, and Dominion, and every Name which is named, not only in this World, but in that which is to come—to have all Things put under his Feet,*[l] and to expect that *his Enemies be made his Footſtool:*[m] In the *Preſence of God* to taſte *the Fullneſs of Joy*, and to drink of thoſe *Rivers of Pleaſure, which flow at his right Hand.*[n]

Theſe Honours were not now in Reſerve for the *eternal Word*, who had enjoyed them all Myriads of Myriads of Ages, without a Moment's Interruption: HE was not now to obtain *a Name more excellent than the Angels,*[o] from whom thoſe Angels derived their Exiſtence; but HE, who for a while *was made lower than they, took upon him the Form of a Servant, and was made in the Likeneſs of Men.*[p] Theſe were the Rewards due to a *ſuffering and afflicted* Character, which ſurely is not

[k] Acts ii. 24. [l] Epheſ. i. 20, &c. [m] Heb. x. 13.
[n] Pſ. xvi. 11. [o] Heb. i. 4. [p] Phil. ii. 7.

ART. VI. that of the eternal and impaſſible Divinity; but of him, who was Man as well as God, the myſtically, and henceforth indiſſolubly incarnate *Word.*

Again, as the *Meſſiah* was anointed to the *regal* Office, as well as to the *ſacerdotal* and prophetical, theſe Honours were due to him as a *King:* He had hitherto appear'd but little in that Character, and enjoy'd but few of the Privileges of Royalty: But as his *Kingdom* was *not* OF *this World*,[q] ſo neither was his *Throne* IN it (this being indeed no proper Place for it.) And tho' we have a lively and well-grounded Hope to ſee the brighteſt Diſplays of that Authority, even on this ſide Heaven, yet as the *Meſſiah* cannot juſtly be ſuppoſed to be ſuſpended from the Exerciſe of the regal Function till that Day, he muſt in the mean while aſcend up into thoſe Regions which are the Seat of his Imperial Throne.

Yet further: There was one Part, even of his ſacerdotal Office, which yet remained to be executed (*viz.* that of making Interceſſion) which He (*being an High-Prieſt for ever*[r]) is to do continually for us: And as the *Jewiſh* High-Prieſt did once a Year enter into the inner Tabernacle, to do that Office for the People, in the more immediate Preſence of God; ſo was it neceſſary that this our High-Prieſt, who had already ſacrificed *once for all*, ſhould alſo *once for all* enter into Heaven, (the great Anti-type of that Tabernacle) there to continue in the conſtant Exerciſe of this remaining neceſſary and indiſpenſable Part of the ſacerdotal Function.

Now

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[q] John, xviii. 36. [r] Heb. vi. 20.

ART. VII.

Now all theſe Particulars were to be compleated upon, or by *Jeſus*, as Man (or rather indeed as God-Man) and therefore it was neceſſary for him to retain ſtill the Humanity, and in Quality of God-Man to aſcend into Heaven, there to reap the promiſed Rewards of his Humiliation; to have *all Things put in Subjection under his Feet*;[s] *his Enemies ſubdued, and made his Footſtool*;[t] and to *ſit down on the right Hand of the Majeſty on high*.[u]

I now proceed to the ſecond Branch of the Article before us, *viz. Chriſt*'s Seſſion at the right Hand of God: *He ſitteth on the right Hand of God, the Father Almighty*.

It ſurely muſt be unneceſſary to obſerve, that this Phraſe was not intended to perſuade us, that God is circumſcribed by any certain or determinate Form, or beareth any Kind of Similitude to the organized Body; conſiſting of Arms, Feet, Hands, *&c.*[w] There is ſcarce any Thing againſt which we are more ſolemnly caution'd, than ſuch an abſurd Conception. As it is the Buſineſs of the firſt Commandment, to exclude from Worſhip all other Gods, or Beings (real or imaginary) which are called Gods, ſo is it the Purport of the ſecond, to forbid the Worſhip even of the true God under any viſible Form or Repreſentation.

Moſt

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[s] Heb. ii. 8. [t] Pſ. cx. 1. [u] Heb. i. 3.

[w] As was ridiculouſly aſſerted by a Sect of Hereticks (thence called *Anthropomorphites*) founded about the middle of the fourth Century by one *Audæus*, a *Syrian* (whence alſo they are ſometimes called *Audiani*; ſee *Epiphanius*) who by an abſurd Conception of that Paſſage in the Book of *Geneſis* "Let "us make Man in our *Image*, after our *Likeneſs*," from thence ſuppoſed, that God had an *human* Form, and was compoſed of Limbs and Members. See *Theod.* Eccleſiaſt. Hiſt. B. IV. c. 10.

ART. VI.

Moſt ſolemn therefore, and moſt frequent are *Moſes*'s Exhortations to the People on this Head: "Take ye good heed unto yourſelves (ſays he, "for ye ſaw no Manner of Similitude on the "Day that the Lord ſpake unto you in *Horeb* out "of the midſt of the Fire) leſt ye corrupt your-"ſelves, and make you a graven Image; the Si-"militude of any Figure; the Likeneſs of Male "or Female; the Likeneſs of any Beaſt, that is "on the Earth; the Likeneſs of any Fowl, that "flieth in the Air; the Likeneſs of any Thing, "that creepeth on the Ground; the Likeneſs of "any Fiſh, that is in the Waters, beneath the "Earth."[x] *To whom then will ye liken God? Or what Likeneſs will ye compare unto him?* Shall we *change the Glory of the incorruptible God into an Image, made like unto corruptible Man?*[y] And imagine the eternal Spirit, *who dwelleth in Light, which no Man can approach unto, and whom therefore no Man hath ſeen, or can ſee,*[z] to be *even ſuch an one* as ourſelves? God forbid! Nothing is, or at leaſt ought to be further from our Thoughts. We are indeed frequently, even in the Holy Scriptures, told of God's Hand, &c. God wrought the Deliverance of *Iſrael*, or ſuch, or ſuch a Thing *with his Arm*: He hath ſeen it *with his Eye*: *With his Mouth hath he ſpoken it*; with various Expreſſions of the like Nature:[a] But the above-cited Paſſages are a ſufficient Caution to us, not to receive them in the naked and literal Senſe. There are many Things figuratively, and (if I may ſo ſay) even improperly expreſs'd in the Scriptures, in Compliance with the Cuſtoms, Capacities, and Appre-

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[x] Deut. iv. 15, &c. [y] Rom. i. 23. [z] 1 Tim. vi. 16. [a] *See* Exod. ix. 3. xv. 16. xvi. 3. Pſ. lxxxix. xxxiii, &c.

Apprehenſions of thoſe, for whoſe Uſe they were intended: Thus *Moſes* deſcribes the World according to the *vulgar* Syſtem;[b] with the Earth in the Center, and the Sun and all the Planets revolving round it; when it cannot be ſuppoſed, that *Moſes* was unacquainted with the true Syſtem, or at leaſt 'tis certain, that the *Spirit* by which *Moſes* wrote was not. Thus *Joſhua* bids that *ſtand ſtill* which never moved;[c] and thus (becauſe we have no Conception of the Actions of *Fighting*, *Helping*, *Delivering*, &c. but by an Arm of Fleſh; of the Perception of an Object, but by the Eye; of ſpeaking or uttering Sounds, but by the uſual Organs of Speech) have the holy Writers aſcribed to God, occaſionally as their Purpoſe required, Arms, Eyes, Lips, Ears, Hands, and the ſeveral conſtituent Members of an organized Body.[d] But the Whole of this is evidently to be reſolved into a certain Figure in Rhetorick, called *Anthropology*;[e] and to conſider it in any other Light, were juſt as wiſe as to put a literal Conſtruction upon the Writings of the Mythologiſts, or the Labours of the Painter, and to ſuppoſe that they themſelves believed *Health*, *Famine*, the *Paſſions*, the *Seaſons*, &c. to have been really *Perſons*, ſuch as they have ſeverally deſcribed and delineated them.

ART. VI.

Of

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[b] Gen. i. [c] Joſh. x. 12.

[d] Πολλάκις γὰρ ταῖς θείαις ἐνεργείαις τὰ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων μορίων ὀνόματα περιτίθησιν; ἔπειτα ῥᾷον οἱ τῶν λεπτοτέρων ἐπαΐειν ἀδυναμένοι διὰ τούτων τοῦ Θεοῦ τὴν προμηθείαν μανθάνουσι. *Theod.* Eccleſiaſt. Hiſt. B. IV. c. 10.

[e] *Anthropology* is particularly uſed in Theology, for a Way of ſpeaking of God after the Manner of Men, by attributing to him human Parts, as Eyes, *&c.* We have frequent Inſtances of *Anthropology* in Holy Scripture, by which we are only to underſtand the Effect, or the Thing which God doth, as if he had Hands, *&c.* See *Chambers*'s Dictionary, in voc. *Anthropology.*

ART. VI.

Of the ſame Nature is the Expreſſion now before us: And to *ſit at God's right Hand* ſeems to intend no more, than to be promoted to the higheſt and moſt extenſive Honours under him. So is it that we, when we would ſhew a particular Reſpect to any Perſon, do endeavour to expreſs it. Thus did *Solomon* ſhew his high Regard for his Mother.[t] Becauſe therefore to ſit at any one's right Hand, carries with it the Notion of enjoying the firſt Honours, next to that Perſon near whom we are *thus* ſeated; therefore when we would expreſs that *Chriſt* aſcended, to enjoy that Degree of Honour in Heaven, we ſay that he aſcended to *ſit on God's right Hand.*[u]

In

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[t] 1 Kings ii. 19.

[u] One of the Expoſitors of the *Creed* labours hard to put ſome ſort of literal Senſe upon this *Seſſion*, arguing that the Father has ſomewhere a viſible and circumſcribed Throne: For that the Prophets *Iſaiah* and *Ezekiel*, in their Viſions, had each of them a Proſpect of ſuch a Thing; (ſee *Iſ.* vi. 1. and *Ezek.* i.) *Micaiah*, ſays he, ſaw the Lord ſitting upon it; (1 Reg. xxii. 19.) and the Author of the *Apocalypſe* goes ſo far as to deſcribe it: (Ch. iv, v, *&c.*) Now a circumſcribed Throne (ſays he) muſt have two Sides, and conſequently, according to our Manner of Speaking, a right Side and a left Side. *Chriſt* therefore may be ſeated on the right Side of this Throne, and may therefore, in ſome ſort, be ſaid literally to ſit at the right Hand of God. (See *Towerſon* on the Catechiſm, Part i. p. 251.) I cannot ſay how far we may venture to admit this Hypotheſis; certainly not ſo far as to imagine the Extenſion and Form of God to be circumſcribed, any more than the Poſture of *Chriſt* to be literal and determined, which it certainly is not, becauſe he who is ſometimes ſaid to *ſit*, is at others ſaid to *ſtand*, (See Acts vii. 55, 56.) and ſometimes barely to *be*. (See 1 Pet. iii. 22.) I muſt confeſs I am inclined to give but little Countenance to it; leſt by ſuch very ſtraight-lac'd Interpretations we ſhould happen to exclude *Jeſus Chriſt* entirely out of Heaven, inſtead of advancing him to the higheſt Place in it. For I think this *real*, this *literal* Throne is ſomewhere ſaid to fill Heaven;

In this State, Place, or Capacity, he now enjoys the higheſt Honours next to the Almighty Father: Next to him, I ſay; for notwithſtanding the Equality in the Godhead, here muſt be allow'd ſome kind of Subordination: *Chriſt*, as God-Man, is inferior to the Father; his Incarnation was an expreſs Act of Humiliation; and in Reſpect of that there are many Particulars wherein *Chriſt* himſelf acknowledges a Superiority,[h] tho' in Reſpect of his Divinity, he conſtantly aſſerts an Unity and Equality. ART. VI.

The Priority of the Father may be reaſonably ſuppoſed to conſiſt in his being the Fountain of thoſe Honours, which *Chriſt* enjoys; ſeeing that it is HE, who exalted him to that Height;[i] who *gave* him that *excellent* and venerable *Name*;[k] and who fills the Throne itſelf, at the right Hand of which *Chriſt* is ſeated as a Place of Honour. Yet muſt we be cautious to allow all this in ſuch a Manner, as may not affect the Divine Nature of *Chriſt*,

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Heaven; at leaſt, if not expreſsly, I am ſure it is ſo in Effect; (ſee *Iſai.* vi. 1, &c.) and he who is ſometimes ſaid to ſit on the right Hand of the *Throne*, is at others deſcribed as being at the right Hand of the *Majeſty*, (Heb. i. 3.) which certainly fills not only Heaven, but Earth alſo. (*See* Pſ. lxxii. 19.) The Writer who gives the moſt circumſtantial Deſcription of this Throne, places the *Lamb* in the *midſt* of it, and all along blends the Objects of that Viſion ſo artfully one among another, as it ſhould almoſt ſeem to have been done on purpoſe to preclude ſuch diſtinct and literal Conceptions. The *Beaſts* are *in the midſt of the Throne*, and *round about the Throne*; (*ſee* Apoc. iv. 6.) and the *Lamb* is *in the midſt of the Throne, and of the four Beaſts*; and even *in the midſt of the* four and twenty *Elders*, who were ſeated *round about the Throne*. (See *Apoc.* v. 6.) Such Conſiderations determine me for a figurative Conſtruction only, expreſſive of *Chriſt*'s Exaltation to the higheſt Honours in Heaven, next to the Almighty Father.

[h] *See* John xiv. 28. Mark xiii. 32, *&c.* [i] Phil. ii. 9.
[k] Ibid.

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Chriſt, or violate that Equality which perpetually ſubſiſts between all the Perſons of the ſacred and myſtic Trinity. It is the Scope of the whole Creed to exhibit *Jeſus Chriſt* to us as God-Man; and in that Character only are we to conſider him in the preſent Article.

It is now Time that I ſhould come to inquire wherein thoſe Honours are to conſiſt, and what are the particular Privileges of the *Meſſiah* thus conſider'd.

By this Exaltation then, *Chriſt* is in the firſt Place, even in his Humanity, elevated to a Superiority over the whole Circle of created Beings, and not only enjoys an high Pre-eminence above thoſe who had exerted a ſeeming Authority over him, while on Earth, but even becomes an Object of Adoration to thoſe Spirits,[l] to whom he had for a while been (in that Reſpect) inferior,[m] and whoſe Miniſtry,[n] and Conſolation,[o] he had ſome Time need of. In a Word, he is put in *full* Poſſeſſion of the laſt, and higheſt Office, to which he was originally anointed, namely, the *Regal*, and from thenceforth becomes a *King for ever, of whoſe Kingdom*, either with Reſpect to Extenſion, or Duration, *there ſhall be no End*?[p]

The firſt Privilege of this Royalty, was to avenge himſelf of his more immediate Enemies. This *Chriſt* executed in the moſt remarkable Manner, by deſolating the whole Land, which had been the Scene of his Sufferings, and by deſtroying almoſt the entire People who had ſaid *we will not have this Man to reign over us*.[q]

The Deſtruction of the *Jews* was evidently a Diſplay of *Chriſt*'s Regal Power, and the Dawn of that Kingdom, which was deſtined for him before the

[l] Heb. i. 6. [m] Heb. xi. 7. [n] Matt. iv. 2. [o] Luc. xxii. 43. [p] Luc. i. 33. [q] Luc. xix. 14.

the World began: For no other Period can be pointed at, by that prophetick Declaration to his Diſciples, that there were ſome then preſent with him, who ſhould *not taſte of Death, till they had ſeen the Son of Man coming in his Kingdom.*[1] During the Lives of all the Apoſtles, except one, was a continued Scene of Oppoſition and Perſecution, on the Side of the Subjects of *Chriſt*, and of Succeſs and Triumph on the Side of the *Jews*, with Reſpect to him; not producing ſo much as a Shadow of *Chriſt*'s Kingdom. But St. *John* was yet alive, when that wretched People had fill'd up the Meaſure of their Iniquities, and his King came *with Power* to take Vengeance on his Enemies. ART. VI.

Another Branch of Royalty, which *Chriſt* was then put in Poſſeſſion of, was the ſole Government of his Church, in which he protects, rewards, puniſhes, *&c.* with an abſolute and unlimited Power: He directs it through its ſeveral Stations and Degrees, and ordains the ſeveral Means, which are to bring it to a joyful Completion.

Yet even theſe are but faint Glimmerings of Majeſty, compared with thoſe brighter and more glorious Diſplays, which he will hereafter exert in the Face of Men and Angels, and which the whole Circuit of Creation ſhall be witneſs to. There yet ſubſiſt many and great Enemies, which eclipſe the Luſtre of his Kingdom; *Sin* and *Death* yet ſtand up to pronounce his Triumph in-compleat; after other Enemies deſtroy'd, theſe alſo muſt fall before him, and *Death* itſelf *ſhall be ſwallowed up in Victory.*[2] Then ſhall it appear in all its Dignity; then ſhall there be no Diſtinction of Nations, and People; but all the Earth ſhall

[1] Matth. xvi. 28. [2] 1 Cor. xv. 54.

ART. VI. ſhall be united under him, its natural and only Lord: Then ſhall be revived all the Bleſſings of a mild and pacifick *Theocracy*; then ſhall Striſe, and Enmity, be Words forgotten in the World; *Nation ſhall not riſe againſt Nation, nor ſhall they practiſe War any more.*[t] Now, alas, his Subjects are expoſed to various Dangers, to innumerable Perplexities, and 'tis often Crime ſufficient to appear his Servant; *without are Fightings, within are Fears:*[u] But *there* ſhall be no ſuch Thing; not an Enemy, either external or internal, ſhall dare to diſturb the ſerene Tranſports of that happy Reign; for He *ſhall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes; and there ſhall be no more Death; neither Sorrow, nor Crying; neither ſhall there be any more Pain.*[w] Such are the Privileges annex'd to that Throne, which is ſituate at the right Hand of God, and *thus muſt it be done unto him, whom He delighteth to Honour.*

I ſhall now cloſe this Article, as uſual, with a ſhort Review of what Conſiderations I have offer'd upon it: From whence it appears that He, who truly aſſents to this Article, muſt believe that that ſame *Jeſus Chriſt*, deſcribed in the former Articles, did after his Reſurrection from the Dead, with that ſame Body, in which he appeared to his Diſciples, by his own effective Power convey himſelf, by a true, literal, and local Motion, from the Earth, up into the higheſt Heavens; and did there take Poſſeſſion of that Place, which is next in Dignity to the Almighty Father; and enter upon that Kingdom, whoſe comprehenſive and laſting Authority ſhall endure throughout all Ages, and one Day take in the whole Circuit of Creation. And thus, and for theſe Ends, ought every *Chriſtian* to ackdowledge, that *Jeſus Chriſt aſcended into Heaven, and ſitteth on the right Hand of God, the Father Almighty.*

[t] Iſai. ii. 4. [u] 2 Cor. vii. 5. [w] Apoc. xxi. 4.

ARTICLE VII.

From thence he ſhall come to judge the Quick and the Dead.

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ACTS x. 42.

And he commanded us to preach unto the People, and to teſtify that it is he, who was ordained of God, to be the Judge of Quick and Dead.

THE ſeventh Article of our Creed enjoins a Belief, that *Jeſus Chriſt*, as formerly characteriſed, *ſhall*, at the appointed Time, *from thence*, where the former Article left him, *viz.* in Heaven, *come again to judge the Quick and the Dead.* ART. VII.

It ſeems incumbent upon me to found the Illuſtration of this Article in an Examination of that Part of it, on which the Whole depends; and when we have eſtabliſhed the Judgment itſelf, we may better proceed to its attendant Circumſtances.

The Doctrine of the Article before us, and of the Text, is briefly in general:

I. That there ſhall be a Time, when all Mankind ſhall be called to a ſtrict and ſolemn Account, and obliged to anſwer for their reſpective Behaviour in this Life, according to the Quality and Tenour of it, whether it have been good or bad. And,

II. In particular, that the Man *Chriſt Jeſus* ſhall be the Perſon who ſhall take this Account,

ART. VII. and preſide at this great and ſolemn Court of Judicature.

But if the general Propoſition be not true, the particular one naturally falls to the Ground. Let us then examine what Grounds we have to believe in general, that there ever will be ſuch a Judgment.

And firſt let us ſee what Reaſon (as ſhe was the earlieſt, and is yet the moſt extenſive Preceptreſs) has to ſay upon this Subject.

We perceive that we are the only Members of the viſible Creation, who have a Power of acting upon rational Principles, and a Capacity of being accountable for our Actions. The Brutes indeed have a Kind of Freedom, and an Inſtinct, which in ſome is ſo remarkable, as almoſt to imitate Reaſon: But yet, not the leaſt Part of their Life or Actions is to be accounted for upon the Principles of Reaſon. 'Tis viſible that they cannot even be taught to deſiſt from thoſe Actions (which we call ill) upon any Notion of a natural or moral Turpitude in them, or even on the Score of their being diſpleaſing to their Maſters; for they are reſtrained from offending, merely by the Conſiderations of thoſe Puniſhments which have uſually followed ſuch or ſuch particular Actions: Nor on the other hand, are their Blandiſhments founded in Love, or a Deſire of Pleaſing, but ſolely in the Deſire of recommending themſelves to thoſe Marks of Favour and Indulgence we have uſually ſhewn them on ſuch Occaſions.

Had a Dog, for Inſtance, never been beat for Theft or Viciouſneſs, he had never ceaſed to ſnarl and purloin, nor trembled and fled the Moment that he had been detected in either of them, without ſo much as the Sight of the Cudgel, or the Sound of an angry Word; nor had he leap'd or fawn'd on Man, had not Man in return fondled, careſs'd,

careſs'd, and fed him. But Man has a Book in his Heart, on which he cannot turn his Eye but he muſt read, that the Quality of Actions reſts on a far different Foundation; and that while ſome have a genuine and intrinſic Luſtre in them, others are as black with a native and inherent Turpitude. ART. VII.

What then ſhall we ſay is the Ground of this particular Excellence? If Man is to be but on an equal Footing with the Brutes for ever, then Conſcience is an uſeleſs Principle, a Liar, and given him only to be his Plague: But if it be, 'tis the only Quality which deſerves this Character; for there is not one of his Affections beſide (any more than of his Organs) but which has its viſible and determinate Uſe. To diſcard this therefore, which points to higher and more noble Purpoſes, while we find Employment for every little petty Quality beſide, were to do a moſt unpardonable Piece of Injuſtice, as well to our own Conſtitution, as to the Author of it.

But if Conſcience and Reaſon have their Uſe, then Man is to be reſerved for ſomething farther than he now ſees, to which they would gradually introduce him; and they are not idle, ſuperſtitious Whiſperers, but the kind Præmonitors of his future Fortunes, by ſuggeſting to him the Quality and Conſequents of his preſent Behaviour.

But perhaps there is no ſuch Thing as Conſcience; and what we fondly call ſo is no more than the Agitation of a weak Mind, early inſpired with falſe Terrors, and the Reſult of a prejudiced Education. Why then does not he, who knows it to be *nothing*, diſcard, and get rid of it? Surely he, who is wiſe enough to make ſuch a notable Diſcovery, is too much a Philoſopher to be afraid of a Shadow. But we ſee often, that ſuch Men

ART. VII. (the greateſt Atheiſts and Libertines I mean) have been very ſoberly and religiouſly brought up; ſo 'tis plain, that the Prejudices of Education are not invincible, or they had not been what they are. But when they have puſh'd their Victory as far as ever it will go, diſcarded Honour, ſhut out Virtue, eradicated all the Principles they imbibed from the Nurſe, the Parent, or the Preceptor, and even ſhook Hands with Humanity, yet *Conſcience* will ſtick to them ſtill; nay, ſtick the cloſer, the more they ſtruggle to get rid of it. Like *Care*[a] in the Poet, it will follow them whitherſoever they go, nor will the fleeteſt Ship or ſwifteſt Courſer carry them out of the Reach of it.

It ſhould ſeem then, that Conſcience is not an accidental, but a natural and inherent Principle. Many Actions indeed take the Denomination of Good or Ill from the Laws and Cuſtoms of different Countries: A Man may do that very ſecurely in *England*, which were a capital Crime in *Turkey*; and ſo the contrary: But theſe are not the Eſſentials; they are no more than By-Laws of different Corporations, and binding only among themſelves; but the Statutes of the univerſal Aggregate are univerſally obligatory, and always the ſame, notwithſtanding they may be ſometimes obſcured by corrupt and wicked Gloſſes.

Deal with others as you deſire to be dealt with yourſelf is a *Catholicon*, which refuſes Sanction to Theft, Murder, Adultery, or Diſobedience, alike at *Mexico*, *Japan*, *Pekin*, or *London*: Nay, Hiſtory will

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[a] ——————Timor & minæ
Scandunt eodem, quo Dominus; neque
Decedit ærata Triremi, et
Poſt Equitem ſedet atra Cura.

Hor. Lib. III. Ode 1.

will tell us, that its Influence is not excluded from Wilds and Deſarts. In a Word, ſet a Man out of the Reach of human Laws, and let him but aſk his Conſcience whether what he is going to do be eſſentially good or evil, and he need not fear having a ſatisfactory Anſwer. ART. VII.

But could we for a while ſuppoſe Conſcience an *accidental* Principle, and all our Hopes and Fears the Reſult of Prejudice in Education, we ſhould then begin to inquire who firſt invented Conſcience; or, which is all one, who firſt invented the Foundation of it. For every Stream has a Spring, every Tradition a firſt Foundation: And the moſt fertile Imagination cannot ſupply us with a ſatisfactory Account, or ſay what gave Birth to ſuch Ideas, but a divine and indelible Impreſs, ſtamp'd upon the Soul by the Finger of God himſelf.

Timor fecit Deos, Fear made the Gods (ſays *Epicurus.*) Without much Subtilty we may reverſe the Aſſertion, and ſay, *Deus fecit Timorem*, God made Fear; otherwiſe Man had certainly thought no more of Virtue or Vice, than doth a Dog, and if he eſcaped Puniſhment for a Robbery or a Murder, would have reſted contented; but any Man, who is ſo unfortunate as to be in that Situation, will tell you how far that is from being the Caſe.

In the next Place, Man is not a ſelf-ſufficient Being; which all Syſtems, even thoſe of the moſt whimſical and abſurd Philoſophers, concur in; every Moment ſupplied them with too many Demonſtrations of it, to permit them to advance the contrary.

If Man were Lord of Nature, or even of himſelf, what a World of gay, healthy, lively young Fellows we ſhould have! No Cares, no Diſtempers, nor no Dying, to be ſure! But alas! whilſt Vanity compliments us with a Superiority over *Part* of

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the Creation, ſomething elſe will whiſper to us, that we are inferior to even *Part* of that, and that we owe a direct Vaſſalage to ſome Being or other, even more abſolute than what is in our Power to exact from the moſt ſervile of our own Dependants.

A very little Conſideration then proves Man not to be independent, and conſequently dependent; for thoſe two Claſſes comprehend the whole Chain of Beings: And that Link of a Chain which is demonſtrably not the uppermoſt, depends manifeſtly upon ſome other above it. Now the Conſequence of Dependance is a Neceſſity of endeavouring to pleaſe, and of avoiding to offend; and this under certain Penalties: A Leſſon, Man may learn from his own Behaviour towards ſuch as he conſiders in that Light, with reſpect to himſelf.

Man then by his Conſtitution, both as an intelligent and as a dependent Being, is accountable for his Actions. Thus much may he learn without turning his Eye off himſelf.

But further: What Metaphyſicians call the *moral Obligation*, is not an ideal and imaginary Thing, but there is a real and eſſential Difference between Good and Evil, a certain and determinate Rule of Right and Wrong, as appears from the indelible Impreſſions of ſuch a Thing upon the Mind; from the univerſal Conſent of all Mankind; in Fundamentals and Eſſentials, though under the Biaſs of different Educations; and from the Tendency of Virtue and Vice to preſerve or hurt the Uniformity and Regularity of the Syſtem, which ought to be inviolate; but moſt demonſtrably from the Nature of the Supreme Being: For if there be a Power above us, he muſt delight in Virtue. The ſtrongeſt and moſt vigorous Efforts

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towards it in Man, are but faint Rays of thoſe perfect Qualities in the Deity, who therefore muſt make much nicer, as well as much truer Diſtinctions between thoſe perpetual Contrarieties. Again, ART. VII.

Man is not the Author of this Rule, becauſe it is unalterable; and a mutable and moſt unſtable Being can never communicate Immutability. An Obligation is founded in the Will of its Author. But it is impoſſible for Man to apply this to himſelf, becauſe he is tied down to an apparent Neceſſity in this Matter, and his Will has nothing at all to do in the Affair; for he cannot perſuade even himſelf, that Piety, Honour, and natural Affection, can be Vices; nor Theft, Murder, and Parricide, Virtues; any more than that *Light* can be *Darkneſs*, or *Darkneſs Light*; *ſweet* can be *bitter*, or *bitter ſweet*. Since Man then is not himſelf the Author of this Law, it muſt follow, that he is accountable for the Breach of it to him who is: Its genuine and inherent Weight, the irreſiſtable Conviction it carries with it, being a Proof that the Legiſlator did not trifle when he made it, nor will he be trifled with in the Obſervance of it.

As certainly then as a *Law implies Sin*,[b] Sin implies Puniſhment. But when? Or where? This World is utterly unfit to be made the Scene of that juſt Retribution. Notwithſtanding that the *moral* Law is interwoven with the *civil*, and committed to the ſame Guardians, yet are there many Violations of it, which cannot come under the Cognizance of an earthly Judge: Such are thoſe, to which a Man has no other Witneſs but his

[b] Rom. vii. 7.

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his own Heart, which will indeed accuſe him, but at another Court; Beſides we find, that though a Man be even brought to the Trial, 'tis poſſible for him to be acquitted on other Scores beſide Innocence: Friendſhip and Intereſt are too ſtrong a Foundation for Partiality; and ſome (who by the way are ſeldom the leaſt guilty) are abſolutely out of the Reach of human Juſtice, merely on the Score of their Station. So that there lies a Neceſſity of one laſt and general Appeal to a Judge free from all theſe Imperfections, who cannot be deceived, impoſed upon, affrighted, corrupted, cajoled, flatter'd, and who is moſt ſtrictly impartial, and *no Reſpecter of Perſons.*

For the extenſive Juſtice of the Lator of this Law excludes a Poſſibility of violating it with abſolute Impunity. Thus Nature, as well that of the Supreme Being, as our own, points out to us a *Judgment* properly ſo called, and declares us obnoxious to the Cenſures of a Court, ſeated beyond the Limits of this World.

The Reſult of theſe Conſiderations has been the general Conſent of Mankind from the earlieſt Infancy of the World, and even amongſt its moſt ignorant and unletter'd Inhabitants.

Whatever Parts of the primitive Syſtem of Religion were loſt after the general Diſperſion of Mankind, this ſtill kept its Ground; and the poliſh'd *Greek* and barbarous *Scythian* alike believed, and trembled at it: Time, Luxury, nor the Devil himſelf could ever entirely wear it out; the worſt and lateſt Ages of Paganiſm did not believe it leſs, though they had Cauſe to fear it more: The Proofs are extant in the Tracts of the Mythologiſts, the Philoſophers, and even the Poets, for almoſt the Space of two Thouſand Years together. Hence their *Tartarus* and *Elyſium*, their *Minos* and

and *Rhadamanthus*, hence that Medley Scene of fantaſtical Horrors, framed upon their whimſical Notions of Juſtice; here one perpetually catching at imaginary Viands, and ſtarving in the midſt of ſeeming Plenty;[c] there another employed in the endleſs Taſk of rolling a Stone to the Top of a Hill, which always turned ſhort, and made him all his Work to begin a-new;[d] one whirling with a perpetual Rotation on a Wheel;[e] and others inceſſantly pumping to fill a Sieve.[f] To ſuch Labours were they condemned by their infernal Judges, according to the Nature and Quality of their Crimes. But let us leave this Land of Darkneſs and Conjectures, and follow the Rays of the Goſpel, which will lead us to the moſt perfect and diſtinct View of this great and ſolemn Scene, where we are no longer tied down to the Perplexity of emblematical Repreſentations, but ſee it *Face to Face*, and where there is not the leaſt Deficiency left, to be ſupplied by Conjecture and Imagination. ART. VII.

Our bleſſed Saviour ſometimes choſe to convey the Doctrine of a future Judgment in figurative, but moſt expreſſive and ſignificant Alluſions: One while the *World* is a great *Field*,[g] and this Judgment is the *Harveſt*; when the *Tares* ſhall be ſeparated from the *Wheat* (though for a while they grow together undiſtinguiſh'd, and ſeemingly unregarded) and each aſſigned its proper Place; the *Wheat in the Garner*, but *the Tares in an unquenchable Fire*. Again; the Goſpel Diſpenſation is a *Net*,[h] which ſhall be drawn to Shore at the End of the World, and the Angels ſhall ſeparate the worthleſs Part of the Contents from ſuch as are good,

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[c] *Tantalus.* [d] *Syſiphus.* [e] *Ixion.* [f] The *Belides.*
[g] Matt. xiii. [h] Ibid.

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good, and fit for Service. Anon we read it in the Hiſtory of the *Houſholder*;[j] who going a Journey, commits his Affairs to his Servants, and at his Return requires a ſtrict Account of their reſpective Management of his Truſt, and rewards or puniſhes them impartially according to their Merits.

But in general the Declarations of it are plain, ſimple, free from all Manner of Perplexity, and even incapable of Miſinterpretation. The Illuſtration of the Parable of the Field is ſo clear, that his Diſciples might well have ſaid to him, [k] *Now ſpeakeſt thou plainly, and ſpeakeſt no Proverb*: For there he expreſsly tells them, that [l] *The Field is the World, the good Seed are the Children of the Kingdom, but the Tares are the Children of the wicked One; the Enemy who ſowed them is the Devil, the Harveſt is the End of the World, and the Reapers are the Angels*; and *as the Tares* in the Parable *were gathered, and burned in the Fire, ſo ſhall it be in the End of this World; the Son of Man ſhall ſend forth his Angels, and they ſhall gather out of his Kingdom all Things that offend, and them that do Iniquity, and ſhall caſt them into a Furnace of Fire, where ſhall be wailing and gnaſhing of Teeth; and the Righteous*, characteriſed by the Emblem of Wheat, *ſhall ſhine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father.*

By daily Hints did *Chriſt* prepare his Diſciples for that full and noble Account of this Circumſtance, with which he indulged them when he was preparing to leave them. He frequently admoniſhes them, that when he comes *in his Glory he will reward every Man according to his Works*,[m] and

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[j] Matt. xxv. [k] John xvi. 29. [l] Matt. xiii, 38, &c. [m] Matth. xvi. 27.

and that then he will aſſign them ſuitable Rewards for whatever they ſhall ſuffer here on his Account.[n] But at laſt he delineates to them that Day in ſuch ſtrong and lively Colours, deſcribes it with ſuch a minute Exactneſs,[o] as to leave thoſe who willingly would not ſee it, without Excuſe; and even to make a briſk and active Imagination acquainted with the whole Proceedings of it. The explicit Declarations of this Particular were not, like ſome others, confined to the Diſciples, while the reſt of the People were only taught in Alluſions:—For it was in the Face of a Multitude, and that no ſmall one, that he aſſerted, that *every idle Word that Men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give Account thereof in the Day of Judgment.*[p] ART. VII.

The Apoſtles induſtriouſly follow the Footſteps of their bleſſed Maſter, and knowing how eſſential a Point it is, omit no Opportunity of inculcating the Doctrine of a future Judgment; or rather indeed ſome Circumſtances belonging to it, which only were then new: The Thing itſelf they ſpeak of with a moſt aſſured Confidence; their Appeals to it are ſuch as declare them not in the leaſt apprehenſive of Oppoſition in that particular Reſpect, and however they labour in Proof of ſome newly revealed Points (as the Time, for Inſtance, and Director of it) yet they plainly ſuppoſe the Foundation to be ready laid for them, by a general Conſent to the Thing itſelf. Yet, as I ſaid before, they omit no Opportunity of eſtabliſhing it: In all their Addreſſes this is ſure to make a Part; 'tis in a manner the firſt Leſſon[q] St. *Paul* read to the *Athenians*, and ſo warmly did he treat of it before *Felix*, that he made the Governor

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[n] Matth. xix. 29. [o] *See* Matt. xxiv, xxv. [p] Matt. xii. 36. [q] Acts, xvii. 31.

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vernor tremble.[f] To ſum up all, that Apoſtle ſcruples not to aſſert it with as much Boldneſs as Death itſelf, which is out of the Reach of Contradiction: [g] *It is appointed unto all Men once to die, but after this the Judgment:* The genuine Scope of which Paſſage is undoubtedly, that as certain as that all Men muſt die, ſo certain is it that Death ſhall be followed by a Judgment.

Having, as I think, fully eſtabliſhed the Judgement itſelf, I ſhall now proceed to the Conſideration of ſome of the Circumſtances which are to attend it; and particularly thoſe to which we are led by the Words of the Article before us: Which firſt enjoin a Belief, that it ſhall be under the Direction of that ſame *Jeſus*, whom we have already traced through all the Scenes of his Life, and followed into Heaven itſelf, from whence he ſhall hereafter come again on this Errand, *viz. To judge both the Quick and the Dead.*

Now though this be indeed a Diſcovery which is but coæval with the Goſpel, and then firſt *brought to Light*, when *Life and Immortality* was, yet are there ſome Conſiderations deducible even from Reaſon, which without poſitive Evidence might almoſt improve a Hint of ſuch a Thing, to Satisfaction and Conviction.

For as it is neceſſary that this Judge be veſted with Omniſcience, or an all-diſcerning Power, in order to render him perfect Maſter of the Cauſes he is then to try; as he muſt be ſtrictly equal and impartial, and of Skill ſufficient to blend boundleſs Mercy with infinite Juſtice; as he muſt be alſo of Power ſufficient to make good the Awards of his Judgment, and to carry it into Execution,

[f] Acts, xxiv. 25. [g] Heb. ix. 27.

Execution, which is I think a Taſk ſuperior to any thing leſs than Omnipotence: As theſe, I ſay, are cogent Reaſons, why our Judge ſhould not be leſs than God; ſo are there on the other hand forcible Conſiderations to perſuade us, that he ought to be Man. ART. VII.

For beſides that it ſeems highly neceſſary to the Solemnity of that aweful Court, that it ſhould be under the Direction of a viſible Judge, which can hardly be ſaid of that Being, who is moſt emphatically ſtiled *the Inviſible King*,[t] it is further requiſite to convince the Priſoners of the great Tenderneſs and Compaſſion, with which that Judgment ſhall be conducted, that it be committed to one, who bears their own Stamp.

It is undoubtedly *a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of the Living God*;[u] for Man, whoſe greateſt Purity is Filth and Vileneſs, to come under the Cenſure of that moſt holy and moſt perfect Being, whoſe Nature holds the moſt direct Contrariety to Sin and Wickedneſs; this, I ſay, muſt fill us with Terror and Confuſion, without any Mixture of Complacency and Hope; muſt ſink us under a Weight, from which we are happily relieved, by finding our Cauſe committed to a Judge, who, having experienced, tho' not all the Infirmities of our Nature, yet all the Temptations to which it is expoſed, may be ſuppoſed moſt likely to extend the greateſt Indulgence to them: To have ſuch a Judge therefore, as both knows their Infirmities, and how far they may be allow'd for, muſt convince Mankind at once of the Tenderneſs, and of the Equity of that Judgment. Our bleſſed Saviour indeed condeſcended to aſſign this as one Reaſon

[t] Col. i. 15. 1 Tim. i. 17. [u] Heb. x. 31.

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On theſe Accounts then it appears requiſite, that our Judge ſhould be both God and Man; wherefore that Office muſt neceſſarily devolve upon Him, in whom alone thoſe two Characters did ever unite.

Again, If we conſider the ſeveral Offices which Chriſt was anointed to, we ſhall ſee that, as in Quality of Prophet, he was to inſtruct and teach us, as Prieſt he was to atone and to intercede for us; ſo as King is he to diſpoſe and govern us. Now Judgment is an inſeparable Right of the regal Office: An earthly Monarch for many Reaſons is obliged to commit this Part of his Function into the Hands of Subſtitutes, yet is he ſtill the true and real Judge; for each of theſe Subſtitutes is but his Repreſentative, and as it were King *pro tempore*. This Neceſſity of acting by Proxy, in them, is founded on the Difficulty of an earthly King's being able to qualify himſelf to execute that Part of his Office with Equity and Impartiality, the Impoſſibility of his being every where preſent, and the great Improbability that any one in that Station ſhould take upon himſelf ſo much Trouble. But none of theſe Difficulties lie in the way, with reſpect to Chriſt, for he is both more capable of this Buſineſs than any Subſtitute we can think of, and can extend his Influence at once over the whole Face of Nature with greater Eaſe, than we can command the Tranſactions of a Room but a few Yards ſquare.

Yet

[w] John v. 27.

Yet again: We are not only Subjects of this King, but truly and moſt emphatically his Slaves, his Vaſſals, his Creatures: His Creatures, for *by him all Things were made, and without him was not any thing made that was made:*[x] His Slaves; for after our moſt ſhameful Revolt he bought us off from our new Maſter, the Devil, at a moſt coſtly Price, even his own moſt precious Blood.[y] So that not to receive Chriſt in this Character of our Judge, were to fall under the heavy Cenſure of the Apoſtle, by *denying the Lord that bought us.*[z] ART. VII.

From the regal Character, blended with the prophetick, reſults a third, which is that of Legiſlator.—The Laws and Ordinances, to which we are ſubject as *Chriſtians*, are founded in the Will of *Chriſt*; the Injunctions, the Prohibitions, are of his Ordaining; the Rewards and Puniſhments of his Denouncing; and *the Word that he ſpake, the ſame ſhall judge us at the laſt Day.*[a] A Prince, who is but Guardian of an ancient Eſtabliſhment, has the beſt Right to reward or puniſh the Violation or Obſervance of it; but while the Founder of that Eſtabliſhment ſurvived, he, if he were properly authoriſed to make it, had the ſtrongeſt Claim to try the Breaches of it, as being the beſt Interpreter of his own Ordinances. As *Chriſt* therefore, the Founder of the *Chriſtian* Diſpenſation, liveth for ever, the ſame Arguments which prove his original Right of conſtituting the Laws of *Chriſtianity*, prove alſo his Claim to maintain and vindicate them. On theſe Foundations, with the additional Conſideration how greatly due ſuch an Exaltation is to his former Sufferings, we might almoſt have ventured to ſay to this Saviour, be-

[x] John, i. 3. [y] 1 Cor. vi. 20. Eph. i. 7. [z] 2 Pet. ii. 1.
[a] John, xii. 48.

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fore the ſolemn Declaration was made, *We believe that thou ſhalt come to be our Judge.*[b]

But it hath pleaſed God to put it upon ſuch a Footing, that if we cannot ſay ſo now, and with the greateſt Sincerity too, Woe is to us; it being inextricably interwoven with our holy Faith, and made one of the fundamental Articles of the *Chriſtian* Profeſſion; and that upon the following Warrants.

Chriſt himſelf often, and expreſsly declared, that *the Father* would not execute that Office himſelf, but had *committed all Judgment to the Son,*[c] and that hereafter *they ſhould ſee him come in his Glory, and all the holy Angels with him,*[d] when all Mankind ſhould be ſummon'd before him, and he would *reward every Man according to his Works.*[e]

He ſcarce ever ſpake of a future Judgment, without inſiſting upon this Circumſtance. If he treats of it in plain and open Terms, he as plainly declares himſelf the Judge; if parabolically, and in Alluſions, he is the *Houſholder*, who calls his Servants to Account, how they have employed the ſeveral *Talents* he entruſted them with;[f] and the *King*, who taketh Vengeance on *thoſe* his *Enemies, who would not that* he *ſhould reign over them*;[g] when the World is the Field, himſelf is the Director of the Harveſt, and the Angels are the Reapers.[h]

When he was upon the Point of leaving the World himſelf, he took eſpecial Care that this Doctrine ſhould be perpetuated, and among other neceſſary Inſtructions expreſsly *commanded* his Diſciples *to preach* it *unto the People, and to teſtify that*

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[b] *Te Deum.* [c] John, v. 22. [d] Matth. xvi. 27, &c.
[e] Ibid. [f] Matth. xxv. [g] Luke, xix. 27.
[h] Matth. xiii.

that it was he who was ordained of God to be the Judge of Quick and Dead.[i] ART. VII.

This Command they moſt faithfully and moſt religiouſly obey'd, and whether abſent or preſent, whether by oral or epiſtolary Inſtructions, whether their Aim were to gain a Proſelyte, or to confirm and edify thoſe already converted; as well in their *Milk* as in their *ſtrong Meat*, this was ſure to make a Part; witneſs that Cloud of Teſtimonies, of which there is hardly a Page of their Writings but can furniſh one.[k] St. *Paul* looked upon the Reſurrection of *Chriſt* as a ſufficient Proof of his Deſtination to this Office, and (fully conſidered) it undoubtedly is ſo; for being a moſt ſolemn Inauguration to his regal Office, of which the Right of Judgment is an inſeparable Appendage; being an irrefragable Proof of his compleat Qualification for that Office, and a ſatisfactory Seal to the Truth of all his former Poſitions, of which this was one not the leaſt inſiſted on, God certainly *gave Aſſurance unto all Men* of his Intent to *judge the World* by him, *in that he raiſed him from the Dead.*[l]

The laſt Thing this Article points at, is, Who ſhall be the Objects of this Judgment? The Perſons who are to be judged, we are told, ſhall be *the Quick and the Dead*; which Phraſe comprehends the whole Race of Mankind: The *Quick*, thoſe who ſhall happen to be alive when it ſhall pleaſe God to put an End to the World; and the *Dead*, all thoſe who ſhall have died, from the Foundation of it to that Time.

[i] Acts, x. 42. [k] Acts, xvii. 31. Rom. ii. 16. 2 Tim. iv. 1, &c. [l] Acts, xvii. 31.

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We muſt all ſtand before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt:[m] *The Sea* muſt *give up the Dead which are in it; and Death and Hell muſt deliver up their Dead which are in them,* and *ſmall and great* ſhall ſtand *before the Throne.*[n] The higheſt Grandeur, or the loweſt Meanneſs ſhall not exempt any from that Cenſure; but the Prince and the Beggar ſhall be upon a level, and there ſhall be no Diſtinction of Rich or Poor, Gentleman or Peaſant; but only of *Sheep* and *Goats*, of *Righteous* and *Wicked:*[o] For *with God there is no Reſpect of Perſons.*[p] We are all equally his Creatures; the higheſt Honours are but his Donations: Strip the King of his Robe and the Beggar of his Rags, you will not know which is which: An Empire cannot enoble a Man's Soul, nor a Dungeon vilify it. And this being truly the Caſe, we are all upon a level, unleſs one gain the Pre-eminence by Superiority of Virtue and intellectual Operations. We may ſay to great Men, *Ye are Gods*, and ſome of them may be Fools enough to believe it; *but they ſhall die like Men*, and the Worms ſhall make as free with the Carcaſe of an *Alexander*, as with that of the meaneſt of his Slaves. Earthly Grandeur is ſo far from being a Plea of Exemption from Judgement, that it is one of the ſtrongeſt Arguments in Proof of it; for it ſets thoſe who enjoy it beyond the Reach of human Juſtice, and the Uſe they make of that Privilege is too often ſuch as cannot be attended with Impunity always, without manifeſt Violence done to the Divine Attributes. That Servant who received *ten Talents*[q] was as accountable to his Lord for his Management of them, as he who received but one; and all the Difference between

[m] Rom. xiv. 10., 2 Cor. v. 10. [n] Apoc. xx. 12, 13.
[o] Matth. xxv. 32, *&c.* [p] Acts, x. 34. 1 Pet. i. 17, *&c.*
[q] Matth. xxv.

between them was, that the firſt had ten times as much to anſwer for as the latter. How airy are the great Man's Hopes of Partiality in that impartial Court, where *Virtue* ſhall be the only true Stamp of *Nobility*, and Deeds, not Titles, ſhall determine his Reception. Nor, on the other hand, are any too mean, any more than too great, to come before that Judgment. He who was leaſt intruſted had yet *one Talent*; nor is there any Station but what enables, nay obliges a Man to merit either good or ill in an equitable Proportion. It is a Crime even to do nothing: He who received but one Talent ſhall not indeed be liable to give Account for more than one Talent; but as his Taſk was but proportioned to his Abilities, if he cannot give a good Account of that one, he muſt expect the ſame Fate which would have befallen the others, who received ten or five Talents, had they been found faulty, *viz.* to be *caſt into outer Darkneſs, where there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth.*[r] ART. VII.

Though I have already ſpoken of all the Appendages of a future Judgment, which the Article before us expreſsly takes notice of, there are yet two which require ſome Obſervation, *viz.* when it ſhall be, and what we ſhall be judged for.

With reſpect to the firſt, the *Heathen* World in general held, that it immediately ſucceeded the Death of each Perſon, or at leaſt his Arrival on the oppoſite Banks of the *Styx*; which ſome Souls (for a very whimſical Reaſon) were ſuppoſed not to reach, till an hundred Years after their Separation from the Body.[s] Some *Chriſtians*, and very good ones too, have

[r] Matth. xxv. 30. [s] They imagined that the Souls of ſuch Perſons, whoſe Bodies had by Deſign or Accident been

ART. VII. have been ſo far of the ſame Opinion, as to allow of ſuch a Thing, together with one laſt or general Judgment. Now whether this be ſo or not, 'tis certain That is not the Judgment intended in this Article, but the other, *viz.* the laſt and general Judgment; and this ſhall not be till the End of this World, when *Heaven and Earth ſhall paſs away*, and all Things be diſſolved. The *Harveſt* is expreſsly ſaid to be the *End of the World*;[t] and the Day of that Judgment is every where in Scripture ſaid to be the *laſt Day*,[u] *i. e.* the laſt Time there ſhall be any ſuch Diſtinction as Day or Night, or Weeks, or Months, or Years; when Time itſelf ſhall be no more, but all be ſwallow'd up in the boundleſs Ocean of Eternity.

Now although that Day be actually fixed, and appointed in the determinate Counſel of God, *for he hath appointed a Day* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *in the which he will judge the World*,[w] yet where to place it, is beyond the Reach of human or even angelick Wiſdom; *for of that Day and that Hour knoweth no Man; no, nor even the Angels.*[x] The *Jews* have indeed a Tradition, derived (as they ſay) from *Elias*, that the Duration of this World is to be juſt ſix thouſand Years. —As this Point does not come under my preſent Purpoſe, I ſhall ſay no more of it, than that the Hypotheſis ſeems to me to be back'd by very ſpecious and probable Reaſons; and though it ſeems to contradict the above Aſſertion of a general Ignorance, yet it may be ſtrictly true, and yet no *Man* at leaſt be at all the wiſer:

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been deprived of funeral Rites, were obliged to wander an hundred Years on this Side the *Styx*, before *Charon* would admit them to a Paſſage in his Boat.

[t] Matth. xiii. 39. [u] *See* the Texts already pointed at,
[w] Acts, xvii. 31. [x] Matth. xxiv. 36.

wiſer: For there ſeems a Kind of a providential Diſagreement among Chronologers[y] concerning the Age of the World; and as it were on Purpoſe to conceal the true Date of its Birth: The Fautors of each Opinion proceed but upon Conjecture, and are far from being ſatisfied in themſelves of their being in the right; and we, not knowing which to follow, may be caught by it To-morrow, when we imagine it two or three hundred Years off; or ſleep out a Century or two in the Earth, before the Bridegroom's Arrival, which we conceit to be due every Hour. Thus far indeed we have pretty good Warrant for, that the general Aſſize ſhall not be till after what St. *John* calls the ſecond Reſurrection;[z] but when we have puſhed our Diſcoveries to the fartheſt, *When ſhall theſe Things be?*[a] is a Query which ſhall not be revealed but by the Thing itſelf. In the mean time, he who is prepared for it knows enough; for he knows, let it come when it will, it cannot take him at a Diſadvantage. ART. VII.

The laſt Enquiry I now propoſe to make, is into the Subſtance of our Indictment.

In the firſt Place, we are to be tried for our Actions and perſonal Behaviour in the reſpective States, in which God hath placed us in this World; *We muſt all ſtand before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt, that every Man may receive the Things done in his Body, whether they have been good or bad.*[b] The

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[y] The *Epocha* of the Creation, according to the *Jewiſh* Computation, is 5509. According to the ancient *Greeks* 7248. The latter *Greeks* 7256. The *Julian* Period 6461. If you will believe the *Chineſe*, ſix Times as much. Mr. *Whiſton*, in a Treatiſe on the *Millennium*, ſuppoſed, that the 6000 Years were to expire about the Year 1720.

[z] *See* Apoc. xx. [a] Matth. xxiv. 3. [b] 2 Cor. v. 10.

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Scroll of our Deeds ſhall be produced;[c] and the Judge will examine how they tally with the ſeveral Directions which he gave, and according to the Quality of them, pronounce our Sentence; either receiving us with the joyful Approbation of *Come ye Righteous*, or diſmiſſing us with that dreadful Doom of *Go ye Wicked.* Even our Words ſhall come into Queſtion, and ſo far that not only for every *wicked* Speech, every impious or blaſphemous Execration, but even for *every idle Word that we ſhall ſpeak, we ſhall give Account in the Day of Judgment:*[d] Nay, not our very Thoughts ſhall eſcape; for even *the Secrets of Men ſhall God judge in that Day by Jeſus Chriſt.*[e] Therefore all thoſe Leſſons of internal and ſpiritual Perfection; therefore that circumſtantial Comment upon the *moral* Law;[f] and therefore thoſe frequent Prohibitions even to *think* what ſavoureth of Evil.— Laſtly, we may be certain, that we at leaſt ſhall be tried by the Standard of *Chriſtianity:* Whoſoever is profeſſedly *under the Law, ſhall be judged by the Law*;[g] therefore the Apoſtle adds to the laſt quoted Text, that That Judgment ſhall be *according to* his *Goſpel*;[h] and the Judge himſelf aſſures us, that *the Word which* he hath *ſpoken, the ſame ſhall judge* us *in the laſt Day.*[i] As for any Thing further, how it will pleaſe infinite Mercy to deal with the *Jew* and the *Gentile* (that Part of them I mean to whom the Word was never preached; for whoever hath heard it, tho' he received it not, ſhall yet be conſider'd as under it, with this Difference, that *he ſhall receive the greater Damnation)* this, I ſay, concerns not us; for whom

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[c] Apoc. xx. 12. [d] Matth. xii. 36. [e] Rom. ii. 16. [f] Matth, v, &c. [g] Rom. ii. 12. [h] Ib. 16. [i] John, xii. 48.

whom it is ſufficient, that we be aſſured that the ſtricteſt Conformity to the moral Syſtem, or even to the *Chriſtian*, upon the bare Principles of Morality, will never procure us the Appellation of *good and faithful Servants*. I ſhall now venture to have done with this Article, having, as I think, ſaid as much as is neceſſary upon it: As to Enquiries what Vehicle *Chriſt* ſhall uſe when he comes to Judgment, what ſhall be the Spot of it, and ſome other Particulars, which ſome, who have treated upon this Article, ſeem to be very nice in, I look upon them as not only fruitleſs, unneceſſary, and unſatisfactory, but even bold and unwarrantable; and therefore ſhall have nothing to do with them, but take my Leave of the Subject with a brief Recapitulation of what has been ſaid upon it. ART. VII.

Only thus far I ſhall obſerve, that the Words of the Article lead us to, and the Scriptures warrant a Belief, that it ſhall be beneath the ætherial Orbs, and ſomewhere on, or near the Earth; for to t' Judgment ſhall *Chriſt* come from Heaven, where the former Article left him, and from his own Words we gather, that he ſhall come in a viſible Manner, and with the higheſt Marks of Triumph and Honour, in the Glory of Omnipotence, and encircled with Angels.

From a Review of the Whole, it appears, that whoever aſſents to this Article, aſſents to thus much; that that ſame *Jeſus Chriſt*, as characteriſed in the former Articles, ſhall, at the End of the World, return *from Heaven in like Manner* as the Apoſtles *ſaw him go into Heaven*; [k] that is, in the ſame united Nature, but with many more Marks of Pomp and Terror. —When all Mankind, living and

[k] Acts, i. 21.

ART. VII. and dead, ſmall and great, ſhall be aſſembled before his Throne; and he ſhall require of them a ſtrict and ſolemn Account of their whole Conduct in this World; not only their Actions, but even their Words and Thoughts, and that by the Rule and Standard of his Laws. And thus, and in this full Latitude, ought we to believe, that *Jeſus Chriſt ſhall come again to judge the Quick and the Dead.*

ARTICLE

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I believe in the Holy Ghoſt.

ARTICLE VIII.

I believe in the Holy Ghoſt.

JOHN xiv. 26.

The Comforter, who is the Holy Ghoſt, whom the Father will ſend in my Name, He ſhall teach you all Things.

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THE two former Portions of the Creed having inſtructed us in every thing, neceſſary to be known relating to the two firſt Perſons, in the ever-bleſſed Trinity; the eighth Article, which is the *1ſt* of the third Diviſion, exhibits to us the *Holy Ghoſt*, or *Spirit*, who is the third Perſon in that ſacred Union, and together with the Father and the Son makes up this myſtic *Triad*.

To this Article is again prefixed the initial *Credo*, *I believe*; not for any other Reaſon, but to contribute to the Elegance of the Diction; for as I have formerly obſerved, it is virtually as much prefix'd to every Article, and to every Portion of each Article, as to theſe two. But becauſe the Words occur to me again, I ſhall here add ſomething to what I have formerly ſaid upon them.

I obſerve then firſt, that to *believe* is an Act indiſpenſably neceſſary to Salvation, for that *without Faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God* [a] is an expreſs Aſſertion

[a] Heb xi. 6.

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ſertion of the Apoſtle; and ſince our Happineſs cannot conſiſt but in ſo doing, therefore without Faith it is impoſſible to be ſaved.

What muſt we ſay then to thoſe Men, who pretend to try even reveal'd Truths by the Standard of their own Conceptions, and will believe nothing but what ſtrikes upon them with as glaring a Demonſtration, as that two and two are equal to four; or that the Whole is more than a Part? By the Apoſtle's Definition of Faith, *viz.* that it is *the Subſtance of Things hoped for, the Evidence of Things not ſeen,*[b] it ſhould ſeem that Faith were excluded by ſuch a Practice, for when Belief ariſes from the Evidence of Things ſeen and known, it is not a Belief of Faith, but of Knowledge and Conviction. But Faith itſelf branches out into ſeveral Parts, ſome of which are in themſelves actually lifeleſs and ineffectual, and therefore will not ſerve our Turn; it behoves us then to ſearch out that lively and efficacious Faith, by which we have Aſſurance that *the Juſt ſhall live.*[c]

Suppoſe us then poſſeſs'd of what Divines call an *Hiſtorical Faith*, which is a ſpeculative Knowledge of, and a bare Aſſent to, Facts and ſome other Matters, related in Scripture. Suppoſe we believe that ſuch and ſuch Things were tranſacted, as we are there told of; that *Jeſus Chriſt* lived, ſuffer'd, roſe again, nay, that he had a Divine Miſſion, will this do? We *believe there is one God,*[d] is this ſufficient? No: For the *Devils* themſelves do as much, they alſo *believe* all this; nay more, they *tremble* at it. If this Faith be not back'd by exalted Acts of Virtue and Obedience, 'tis an inanimate Careaſe, *a Body without a Soul*, fruitleſs and dead.

If

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[b] Heb. xi. 1. [c] Ibid. x. 38. [d] James ii. 20.

If further to this Knowledge and Aſſent we add alſo an Approbation of, and even a Joy in receiving thoſe Revelations; if that Joy ariſe but from ſome carnal Conſiderations, and will not ſtand the Teſt of Conflicts; if it wither at the Heat of the Sun, or ſink beneath Thorns and Briars, it then conſtitutes but what is call'd a *Temporary Faith*, as uſeleſs, and more dangerous than the former. ART. VIII.

But if we give our Aſſent only to certain Propoſitions, which appear ſo evident, that we cannot well refuſe it; and withold it from every thing elſe which does not bring ſuch Demonſtration with it, or at leaſt does not come within the narrow Limits of our Comprehenſion: This is at beſt but a partial and imperfect Faith; or rather indeed is wholly undeſerving of that Appellation. The incredulous *Thomas* could not think to make a Merit of believing that his Maſter was riſen, after he had probed his Hands and his Side,[e] for that afforded an Evidence which gave a very different Turn to his Belief.

We muſt ſearch deeper then for that meritorious and efficacious Faith, which is to recommend us to God; for by neither of theſe muſt we hope to live. If *the Juſt ſhall live by Faith*, it muſt be by ſuch a *Faith* as is *juſt* in itſelf; a Faith, by which we rely on God's Word, and Promiſes, for that Reaſon only, becauſe they are his Word, and his Promiſes; by which, with the moſt ſubmiſſive Deference to Infinite Wiſdom, we receive all the Commands of the Almighty, and without preſuming to ſcan them by our own weak Capacity, ſet ourſelves only upon endeavouring faithfully to obey them, and reconcile them to our Practice, even tho' we ſhould fail to do it to our Reaſon.

The

[e] John xx.

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The Bleſſing is due to *thoſe who have not ſeen, and yet have believed.*[f] Nay a kind of Improbability is ſo far from being an Obſtacle, that it even ſeems neceſſary in theſe Matters, and the Merit of Faith is derived from, and riſes in Proportion to the apparent Difficulty in the Object.

When God promiſed *Abraham* an Heir, and *Abraham* believed the Promiſe, his Faith was *counted unto him for Righteouſneſs:*[g] Why? becauſe it was founded ſolely on the Faithfulneſs and Veracity of God; the Thing itſelf being in Nature very improbable, that *Sarah*, whoſe Age and other Circumſtances pleaded ſtrongly againſt Conception, ſhould nevertheleſs conceive and bear a Child by her venerable Lord, whoſe Head was already white with a full Century of Years.

This Faith was ſhortly after render'd more illuſtrious by a ſeverer Trial; for he is commanded to offer up this ſo long wiſh'd for, this favourite Son, as a Burnt-Offering to God.[h] Now had *Abraham* ſtood, like our modern *Sceptics*, to try the Reaſonableneſs of the Command by his own Conceptions, and reſted in the Award of plain Human Nature, he had probably fallen ſhort of his Righteouſneſs, and of his Reward too: For in *Iſaac* was his promiſed Seed to be called; from him was to proceed that Multitude, which ſhould vie with *the Stars of Heaven*, and *the Sands of the Sea*, for Number.[i] But if this Son muſt die, what then becomes of all his viſionary Hopes? That Son was yet childleſs, and the Grave was no Place to beget an Heir in; and as for *Abraham*, twenty-five Years being added to the former Weight of his and *Sarah*'s Age, render'd the Improbability of his having another

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[f] John xx. 29. [g] Gen. xv. 6. [h] Gen. xxii.
[i] Gen. xv. 5. xxi. 12.

another Child in the Room of *Iſaac* much greater than when *Iſaac* was born. But *Abraham* made no Account of all theſe affrighting Reflections; he conſider'd only that it was the Command of God, to which an implicit Obedience was due. As for the Promiſes which God had made him, he did not doubt their Accompliſhment, becauſe the Moſt High had ſpoken it; and the Methods he ſubmitted intirely to him: He conſider'd him as able (if there were no other Way) to reſtore *Iſaac* to Life again, and therefore prepared chearfully to comply with the Injunction, without the leaſt Heſitation or Reluctance. ART. VIII.

Now ſurely all this was intended not only for a ſatisfactory Proof of *Abraham*'s Faith and Obedience, but *that he might* alſo *be the Father of all them that believe*,[k] and a laſting Monument of the Neceſſity and Worth of an intire Submiſſion to, and Reliance on the Divine Wiſdom, in which briefly doth conſiſt that only excellent and juſtifying Faith. Nor is that frequent Mention which we find in the Scriptures made [l]*for his Sake alone, that it was imputed to him, but for ours alſo, to whom* Righteouſneſs ſhall in like Manner be imputed, *if* in like Manner *we believe in him*, who imputed that Righteouſneſs to *Abraham*.

When thoſe Propoſitions in Religion which are properly term'd *Myſteries*, are offered to ſome Men, they eagerly refuſe to aſſent to them. Why? Becauſe they are impoſſible. Surely no; for if they be, there is no God: For either he *is not*, or he *is*, παντοδύνατος, equal to every Task. If he loſe one Attribute of Divinity, farewell the reſt. But, ſecondly, they cannot comprehend how ſuch Things

[k] Rom. iv. 11. [l] 23. 24.

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should be. What then? Are they ever the farther from being true?. 'Tis certain that we cannot trace Eternity or Infinity; is God therefore not eternal, or Space not infinite? But thirdly, these Things do not bring that Degree of Demonstration with them, as do those to which they have given their Assent. Nor is it necessary they should: Were there not some Things in Religion, which carried with them in some Sort the Air of a Mystery, there were no Room for Faith, and the Whole of Righteousness would be resolved into that of the *moral Law*.

Whatever Difficulties then occur to us in God's Word, we are not to reject any Proposition, at least till we can get the better of these two Considerations, which I think we shall not easily do: First, that their being above our Comprehension cannot be a satisfactory Proof of their Fallacy; because we know that there are many Things of whose real Existence we are well satisfied, yet absolutely at a loss to account for, or comprehend how it should be. Unless, for Instance, we had ocular Demonstration of the magnetic Virtue, of the petrifying Quality of some Fluids, of the Revolutions of the heavenly Orbs, *&c.* we should say they were utter Impossibilities; but these ought to be constant Monitors to us, that many other Things may be strictly true which we have not this Evidence for, altho' they do not come within the Bounds of our Comprehension. We surely must know that our Capacities are not infinite, and have great Reason to believe that there are even created Beings superior to us in this Particular, as well as inferior; and if we may be herein excelled by created Beings, how vastly short must we fall of that boundless Ocean, from which these Myriads of little Channels flow, itself still remaining infinite and inexhaustible.

Latter

Latter Ages have made Diſcoveries of certain Things in Nature, which the Ancients uſed to rank among the Abſurds and Impoſſibles: But were they ever the more abſurd or impoſſible, becauſe they thought them ſo? No, we have Demonſtration that they were not; we are yet in the ſame Perplexity with reſpect to certain other Particulars, which nevertheleſs are perhaps ſo eaſy in themſelves, that when we ſhall hereafter make the Diſcoveries, we ſhall be amazed and aſhamed at our Ignorance. But ſhall we in the mean while, who cannot read ſome of theſe, the leaſt of his Works, preſume to read that myſterious and incomprehenſible Being himſelf? And vainly thinking him *ſuch an one as ourſelves* turn to Ridicule every thing that does not tally with our ſtraighten'd Ideas? Shall we ſay there is no Proſpect beyond yon Mountain, becauſe our View is terminated there? Or becauſe *Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it enter'd into the Heart of Man*[m] *to conceive* the Joys of Heaven, ſhall we therefore ſay there are no ſuch Joys? Alas, vain Man, wouldſt thou expect all the Secrets of Omnipotence ſhould ſtrike upon thy Conception with as much Eaſe and Expedition as viſible Objects do upon the Retina of the Eye? *Canſt thou*, even by ſearching with the moſt laborious and unwearied Application of Mind, canſt thou even then *find out God? Canſt thou find out the Almighty to Perfection? It is as high as Heaven, what canſt thou do? deeper than Hell, what canſt thou know?*[n]

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But ſecondly, even the Myſteries of Religion come attended with ſuch Evidence, as we cannot reaſonably or ſafely reject. We give our Aſſent to many Things which we declare appear ſtrange

[m] 1 Cor. ii. 9. [n] Job xi. 7, 8.

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to us, upon the ſole Word of any Man, of whom we have a good Opinion.—*If then we receive the Witneſs of Men, the Witneſs of God is certainly greater.*[o] Our Motives to Belief in Man are his Knowledge and his Truth; we ſuppoſe him well ſatisfied of what he aſſerts, however ſtrange it ſeem to us; that he is not himſelf deceived; and that he will not impoſe a Lye upon, and deceive us. Now both theſe Motives do moſt ſtrongly perſuade us to an implicit Faith in the Word of God, in whom thoſe reſpective Qualities do reſide in the higheſt and moſt extenſive Perfection; who is both Knowledge and Truth in the Abſtract; and who is as incapable of putting a Forgery upon us, as of being himſelf deceived by one. As for the uſual Reply to this Argument, How ſhall I know Theſe Things to be the Word of God? It is a Matter which does not by any Means come within the Limits of my preſent Deſign; (tho' I ſhall always think the Authority of the ſacred Scriptures, and the general Concurrence of the greateſt and wiſeſt Men of the Church in all Ages, from the apoſtolic down to the preſent, in their Interpretation, to be a ſufficient Anſwer to it.) All that I would at preſent eſtabliſh is, that if a Doctrine be founded in the apparent Senſe of a genuine Text of Scripture, it comes ſufficiently recommended to our Belief, and cannot fairly be rejected, on Account of any natural or human Improbability or Myſteriouſneſs it may carry in it.[p]

Chriſtian

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[o] 1 John, v. 9. [p] It was not therefore ill ſaid of him, who being aſk'd how he could believe that a Whale, which is known to have a remarkably narrow Throat, could ſwallow *Jonah*? wittily and honeſtly replied, that he ſhould not have ſcrupled to believe that *Jonah* had ſwallowed the Whale, had he the ſame Authority for it.

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Chriſtian Infidels (if I may be allow'd the Term) may be rank'd under four Claſſes. In the firſt are they, who neither know nor care what the Religion enjoins or contains, nor ever give themſelves the Trouble to conſider whether the Propoſitions be true or falſe: Theſe are unworthy of any Arguments, but Stripes. In the ſecond, are they who reject ſuch Propoſitions, for Want of Evidence that they came from God: Theſe I refer to many excellent Tracts, written profeſſedly in Proof of the Divinity of the Holy Scriptures; and briefly as an Anſwer to this Objection, inſerted a few Lines above. A third Sort are they who would believe the Myſteries of *Chriſtianity* if they could: They have tried, they ſay, but cannot believe them for their Lives: And ſhould they ſay they did, they muſt but lye in their Hearts; and ſure God cannot be angry with them for with-holding their Aſſent from ſuch Propoſitions, as every Thing they can think of perſuades them not to believe. Very ſpeciouſly urged this: But have they indeed tried? Or rather have they not rejected them at firſt Sight? And is not their Want of Faith owing chiefly to their Want of Attention to the Evidence offer'd in Behalf of thoſe Propoſitions? If they have ſearch'd at all, has not their Search been very faintly carried on, and very ſoon given over? And have they not been ſometimes more active in Queſt of Arguments to ſupport their Infidelity, than of ſuch as might remove it? If either of theſe be the Caſe, I am afraid their Hopes of appearing innocent are built upon a ſandy Foundation. Have they come with a willing and docible Mind to ſeek Wiſdom, and panted after Inſtruction? Have they, to their own earneſt Endeavours to be convinced, added a ſerious and hearty Prayer, for the enlightening and aſſiſting Spirit of God?

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And are they ſtill incredulous?—Surely no: For I dare venture to affirm, that after all this, if they have found no other Motive to engage them to give their Aſſent to theſe myſterious Points, they have at leaſt found that they are the expreſs Declarations of God; and that no Conſiderations whatever are of Force ſufficient to warrant a Want of Faith, where his Word doth enjoin and require it.

In the fourth and laſt Claſs are a Sort of Infidels, who are ſo (as they ſay) upon religious Principles, and cannot take God's Word againſt himſelf, or give their Aſſent to any Thing which they think derogates from his Honour, as (in their Opinion) is done by ſuch a Participation of it as we ſuppoſe in the Trinity.

I own I cannot ſee any ſuch Thing; but rather think there is ſomething of an unſpeakable Majeſty in ſuch an incomprehenſible and myſterious Entity. But in whatever Light the Thing appears to me, if I have God's Word that it really is ſo, I know that *to obey is better than Sacrifice; and to hearken, than the Fat of Rams.*[q] It is not for me to diſpute the Word of my Creator, if he tell me that three may be one, any more than his Will, ſhould he command me to ſacrifice my Child. The laſt is as repugnant to human Nature, as the firſt to human Reaſon: Nay, even to Reaſon and a divine Ordinance. But had *Abraham* refuſed Submiſſion to even this hard Trial, he had wanted that Part of Righteouſneſs which derived to him the glorious Titles of *Friend of God*,[r] and *Father of the Faithful.*—I ſhall cloſe this Digreſſion with ſome

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[q] 1 Sam. xv. 22. [r] James ii. 23. Ἀβραὰμ ὁ φίλος πιστὸς ἀγορευθεὶς πίστος εὑρέθη ἐν τῷ αὐτὸν ὑπήκοον γένεσθαι τοῖς ῥήμασιν τοῦ Θεοῦ. *Clem. Rom.* Ep. I. ad *Cor.* c. 10.

ſome Words of St. *Paul*, which are remarkably appoſite to my preſent Purpoſe, becauſe he therein imputes the Whole of the *Jews'* Miſcarriage to the Want of that Faith which I have hitherto been wholly employed in endeavouring to eſtabliſh. ART. VIII.

" What ſhall we ſay then? That the *Gentiles*, " who followed not after Righteouſneſs, have at- " tained to Righteouſneſs, even the Righteouſneſs " which is of Faith: But *Iſrael*, which followed " after the Law of Righteouſneſs, hath not at- " tained to the Law of Righteouſneſs: Where- " fore? *For this Reaſon*, becauſe they ſought it " not by FAITH, but as it were by the Works of " the Law."[1]

What is here introduced, added to what I have formerly ſaid on this Head in the firſt Article, will (as I take it) be a ſufficient Comment upon the Words *I believe*; and enough to ſhew what Kind of Aſſent that is which we are required to give to theſe ſeveral Propoſitions, under our preſent Conſideration.

As the Hereſy of the *Pneumatomachi*[2] is the

[1] Rom. ix. 30, 31, 32. [2] *Pneumatomachi* (or Oppoſers of the Spirit) a general Name given to all thoſe Heretics, who denied either the Divinity or the Perſonality of the Holy Ghoſt. At firſt they were called by the ſecond general Council *Semi-Arians*, but afterwards were diſtinguiſhed from the *Arians*, who were called χριστόμαχοι (*Chriſtomachi*) by this Title of *Pneumatomachi*. 'Tis uncertain who firſt ſet this Hereſy on foot; however, it made very little Progreſs till *Arius* eſpouſed and taught it. Of theſe *Pneumatomachi* ſome admitted the Holy Ghoſt to be a *Perſon*, but not a *divine* Perſon, &c. Others abſolutely denied both; pleading, that the Words implied no more than a Quality, Property, &c. *Macedonius*, Biſhop of *Conſtantinople*, and *Euſtatius*, Biſhop of *Sebaſtia* appeared at the Head of this Sect, about the Middle

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moſt obſtinate that ever the Church had to combat with, I judge what I have here offer'd will be thought not an improper Prologue to the Illuſtration of the Article before us; to which I ſhall now proceed.

The *Holy Ghoſt* is the third Perſon in the ſacred Trinity, who, *proceeding from the Father and the Son*, together with the Father and the Son doth conſtitute the *one* God; and therefore, *together with the Father and the Son is worſhipped and glorified.*[a]

The Term *Ghoſt* is the ſame with Spirit, or ſpiritual Eſſence, diſtinct from Corporeity; and the Epithet *Holy* is added, as well in reſpect of his Office, which is in an eſpecial Manner that of *Sanctification*, as to diſtinguiſh him from all other Beings, which are characteriſed by the Name of Spirits.

I ſuppoſe I need not take much Pains to prove, that this was the Senſe of the Compilers of the Creed; that they intended we ſhould conceive ſomething more by the Term, than a mere *Quality*: Its entire Conformity in all other Reſpects to the Creeds of all thoſe orthodox Churches, which conſtantly maintained both the *Perſonality* and *Divinity* of the *Holy Spirit*, acquits them of any other Intention: And in this Senſe, agreeable to the uninterrupted Practice of the Catholick Church of Chriſt, we do receive and expound it; being, (as

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of the 4th Century.—Ὡς δὲ ὁ Μακεδόνιος τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα συναναλαβεῖν εἰς τὴν θεολογίαν τῆς τριάδος ἐξέκλινε τόδε μὴ καὶ τοῦτο ἐγὼ ἔφη οὔτε θεὸν ὀνομάζειν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον αἱροῦμαι οὔτε κτίσμα καλεῖν τολμήσαιμι· διὰ ταύτην δὲ τὴν αἰτίαν καὶ πνευματομάχους ἀποκάλουσιν αὐτούς. *Socrat.* Eccleſiaſt. Hiſt. Lib. II. c. 45.

[a] Symbol. *Athanaſ.*

(as we truſt) ſufficiently authoriſed thereto by the ſacred Scriptures, and ſuch other Conſiderations as I ſhall preſently make it my Buſineſs to produce. ART. VIII.

I ſhall begin with thoſe which tend to prove, that the *Holy Ghoſt* is not a *Quality*, but a real *Perſon*.

To whatſoever *perſonal* Actions are ſtrongly and expreſsly attributed, that muſt be a Perſon: But *perſonal* Actions are ſo attributed to the *Holy Ghoſt*, who muſt therefore be a Perſon, and not a Quality. For the *Holy Ghoſt* both *receives* and *executes* a Commiſſion (even the former of which cannot be juſtly ſaid of a Quality, much leſs the latter) in Conſequence of which he performs the following ſeveral *perſonal* Actions. [b] *The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghoſt, whom the Father will ſend in my Name, he ſhall* teach *you all Things; he will* teſtify *of me:—And when he is come he will* reprove *the World; he will* guide *you into all Truth; for he ſhall not ſpeak of himſelf, but whatſoever he ſhall* HEAR *that ſhall he ſpeak: And he ſhall* SHEW *all Things to come, he ſhall* glorify *me, for he ſhall receive of mine, and ſhall* ſhew *it unto you.* All which Words are nothing elſe but ſo many Deſcriptions of a Perſon. A Perſon *hearing*; a Perſon *receiving*; a Perſon *teſtifying*; a Perſon *ſpeaking*; a Perſon *reproving*; a Perſon *inſtructing*, &c.

To this the *Pneumatomachi* anſwer, by reſolving the Whole into a certain Figure in Rhetoric, called *Proſopopœia*, by which *perſonal* Actions are attributed to confeſs'd Qualities; of which they produce an Inſtance even in the Scriptures themſelves, *viz.* in St. *Paul*'s Elogy on *Charity*, (1 *Cor.* xiii.) where ſhe is ſaid to be *kind*, to *bear*, to

[b] John xiv. 26. xvi. 8, 13, 14.

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But if there appear to be Inſtances of *perſonal* Actions aſcribed to the *Holy Ghoſt*, which are inconſiſtent and incompatible with God the Father, Proofs which the *Proſopopœia* cannot reach, then muſt the *Holy Ghoſt* be yet conſidered as a diſtinct Perſon.

Thus then Interceſſion (which is certainly a *perſonal* Act) is aſcribed to the *Holy Ghoſt*. [c] *The Spirit maketh Interceſſion for us.* With whom? Even with God the Father. But does God the Father intercede for us with himſelf? Or is the Act of Interceſſion any where ſuppoſed to be Part of the Office of the firſt Perſon in the Godhead?

Again, the Holy Ghoſt is *ſent*,[d] receives his Commiſſion from the Son, jointly with the Father: He even derives ſomething from the Son; for, *He ſhall receive of* mine (ſaith he) *and ſhall ſhew it unto you*:[e] Which cannot be true of the Perſon, or even of a Quality of God the Father, who *ſendeth*, but is never ſent; who *giveth* liberally, but is incapable of receiving from any Being whatſoever.

Again; to *ſpeak* and *hear* are perſonal Acts; but to ſpeak as not *of himſelf*, is by no Means applicable to God the Father. Of whom then are we to interpret this, *When he is come he will guide you into all Truth; for he ſhall not ſpeak of himſelf*,

[c] Rom. viii. 26, 27. [d] *Compare* John xiv. 26. & xvi. 7.
[e] Ibid. xvi. 14.

ſelf, but whatſoever he ſhall hear that ſhall he ſpeak,[f] but of a Perſon diſtinct both from the Father and the Son? ART. VIII.

Yet further: This Confeſſion of our Faith is founded on that ſacred Form which was by *Chriſt* himſelf enjoined to be uſed at the Initiation of a Member into his Church: We are baptized *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt.*[g] The Father and the Son are both confeſſedly Perſons; this Quality or Property (if it be no more) was already included in the Name of the Father, and needed not to have been ſelected for a particular Mention any more than any other of God's Qualities: But the very Conjunction of him with two allowed Perſons, the mere Force of the Words, do prove the *Holy Ghoſt* to be ſomething more than a Quality: In a Word, a true, real, and diſtinct Perſon.

Laſtly, upon our Saviour's aſcending up out of *Jordan*, after his Baptiſm, there was ſuch a Manifeſtation of the *Holy Spirit*, as puts the Thing paſt Diſpute. The Part aſcribed to him in that Circumſtance, is ſuch as plainly beſpeaks Perſonality; for his Deſcent and Appearance were viſible:[h] It was the pre-declared Token to the *Baptiſt*, whereby he ſhould know the *Meſſiah*:[i] *I ſaw the Spirit*, &c.[k] ſays *John*. Now a *viſible* Quality is a much greater Myſtery than what the *Pneumatomachi* cavil at; 'tis a Camel in lieu of a Gnat: The *Holy Ghoſt* therefore is a Perſon, and a Perſon diſtinct both from the Father and the Son; for he reſted viſibly on

[f] John xvi. 13. [g] Matth. xxviii. 19. *Ex hoc Loco Veteres* et Naturæ unitatem, et Perſonarum pluralitatem in Deo colligebant. *Luc. Brugenſis*, in Loc.

[h] Σωματικῷ, ſays St. *Luke*; in a bodily Shape, ch. iii. 22.

[i] John i. 33. [k] Ibid. 32.

ART. VIII. on the Head of the latter; and the former (whom *no Man hath ſeen at any Time*) manifeſted himſelf at the ſame Inſtant a-part, by an audible *Voice from Heaven.*[l]

'Tis obſervable, that *Simon* the Magician, who began the *Gnoſtic* Hereſy,[m] within a very few Years after the Death of our Saviour, and during the Lives of almoſt all the Apoſtles, amongſt other Impieties, exhibited himſelf to his deluded Followers as the *Paraclete*, or *Comforter*, under which Title the *Holy Ghoſt* was by *Chriſt* promiſed to his Diſciples (in which he was followed by many of the firſt *Hereſiarchs*, particularly *Montanus*;) from which it is evident, that there was at that Time very little Notion of a Quality or Subject; for had not the general Senſe of the Church declared for *Perſonality* at leaſt in that *Paraclete*, *Simon* could never have thought of ſuch an unaccountable Deluſion: Nor is it at all improbable that ſome ignorant *Chriſtians*, carrying their Notions of this Perſonality

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[l] *See* Matt. iii. Luke iii.

[m] *Simon*, a pretended Convert to *Chriſtianity* (ſee *Acts* viii.) began the *Gnoſtic* Hereſy, about four or five Years after our Saviour's Crucifixion. 'Twere almoſt endleſs to enumerate his ridiculous and blaſphemous Conceits: This however he exacted of all his Followers, that they ſhould acknowledge him for the *Paraclete*; the *Holy Ghoſt*; the *ſupreme Power*, &c. *Montanus* appeared in the ſame Character towards the Cloſe of the ſecond Century; and in ſhort, after having been aſſumed by many, at different Times and Places, it was at laſt taken up by that grand Impoſtor *Mahomet*. So that there always have been ſome who have conſider'd the *Holy Ghoſt* as a Perſon; and if it be a Miſtake, it is at leaſt a very old one, having no later an Author, than a Man who was co-temporary with our Saviour himſelf; broach'd as it were under the very Croſs, overlook'd by the Apoſtles, and patroniz'd by the beſt and greateſt Members of the Church in all ſucceſſive Ages: A Duration few Hereſies beſide can boaſt of.

Perſonality too far, might give Birth to this In- ART. VIII.
vention of his.

However, it was never objected either to him or *Montanus* by the Orthodox, that there was no ſuch *Perſon* as the *Holy Ghoſt*; and certainly it behoved the Apoſtles eſpecially, who were moſt of them living, when *Simon*'s Blaſphemy was at its Heighth, to have uſed ſome Methods to prevent the Growth of ſo dangerous an Error, as is that of *perſoniſing* a mere *Quality*, and aſcribing Exiſtence to what had no Being in Nature; and how eaſy would it have been to quaſh not only *Simon*, but all *Pſeudo-Paracletes* for ever, by obſerving that there was Error in the very Foundation, and that the Term *Holy Spirit* implied not a *Perſon*, but only a Subject, a Quality, a Grace, a Gift, *&c.* This I ſay we might reaſonably have expected from ſome of the Apoſtles, or apoſtolic Men, who were ſo induſtrious to detect and confute all other Innovations, as faſt as they offer'd. What then can their Silence here imply, but that they had nothing to object to this Part of the Article, and that *Simon*'s whole Deceit lay, not in conſtituting the *Holy Ghoſt* into a Perſon, but in counterfeiting that *Perſon*, and aſſuming a Character which was indeed in Being, but did by no Means belong to him. If therefore in that early Age of the Church the *Holy Ghoſt* was conſider'd as a *Perſon* (as from hence it ſhould ſeem he was) we may ſurely venture to conclude, that it muſt have been on ſuch Grounds, as muſt fairly warrant the Belief of it to all ſucceeding Ages.

I have been very conciſe in the Proof of this Particular; and you will eaſily perceive that I have omitted very many Paſſages, which might have been, and uſually are urged in this Behalf: But as there are ſome of them, which lie more expoſed to the

ART. VIII. the *Socinian Proſopopœia*; and as the Strength of thoſe already urged, cuts off the Neceſſity of recurring to other Arguments, I choſe to avoid a Prolixity, which rather confuſes than illuſtrates, and to confine myſelf to ſuch as are not affected by that Evaſion.

But 'tis not enough to have proved the Exiſtence, the Being of the *Holy Spirit*, to have reſcued him from the Attacks of thoſe, who would reduce him to a mere Form, Quality, Subject, or ſomething they know not what; ſince there are very many of his moſt ſtrenuous Oppoſers who readily admit as much, but at the ſame Time offer him at leaſt an equal Violence, by ſuppoſing him to be a created Being, and at beſt but chief of the *miniſtring Spirits*, who attend the Throne of God. Wherefore my next Taſk *muſt be to ſhew that he is not only a* Perſon but a *divine* Perſon.

Firſt then, if the *Holy Ghoſt* be only a Creature, ſo what Confuſion follows from aſcribing to him the Operation in the Conception of the bleſſed *Jeſus!* Which is nevertheleſs expreſsly done by as many of the holy Writers, as ſpeak at all of that Circumſtance.[m] An Angel impregnating a mortal Woman ſavours a little too much of the *Heathen Theology*, and gives us rather an Idea of the lewd Amours of *Jupiter*, and his Fellow Deities, than of the miraculous Conception of a pure and immaculate Virgin; which ſeems to be a Taſk peculiar to Omnipotence, and therefore not aſcribable to any *Creature* whatever: And this was the very Reaſon aſſign'd by the Angel, why *Chriſt* (with reſpect to his Incarnation) ſhould be called the *Son of God*, becauſe the bleſſed Virgin was to conceive him by the ſole Influence of the *Holy Ghoſt*.[n] Here

[m] *See* Mat. i. Luke i. [n] Luke i. 35.

Here then either the *Holy Ghoſt* muſt be acknowledged to be God, or elſe Recourſe muſt be had again to the Suppoſition of a Quality or Energy, which is I hope already ſufficiently refuted. ART. VIII.

But, ſecondly, the Title of GOD is expreſsly given to the *Holy Ghoſt* by one of thoſe very Perſons, who having been newly filled with his ſacred Influence,[o] muſt neceſſarily be allow'd to be the beſt qualify'd to *teſtify* of him to the World. Upon *Ananias*'s attempting to withold Part of the Price of his Land, and giving a falſe Account of the Sum ariſing from the Sale of it, *Why*, ſaith the Apoſtle to him, *hath Satan filled thine Heart to lye unto the Holy Ghoſt?— Why haſt thou conceived this Thing in thine Heart? Thou haſt not lyed unto Men, but unto GOD.*[p] In the former Part of the Sentence, the Perſon lyed unto is the *Holy Ghoſt*; in the latter, it is expreſsly *God*. What warrantable Concluſion can be drawn from hence, but that *God* and the *Holy Ghoſt* are the ſame! I ſhall not trouble myſelf or you with an Anſwer to Cavils, which (as a learned *Expoſitor*[q] juſtly obſerves) deſtroy themſelves; the Multiplicity and Diſconſonancy of the Anſwers to this Argument ſufficiently expoſes the Weakneſs of them all; and the very beſt of them is grounded on a manifeſt Violence to Grammar and the Sacred Text.[r]

Therefore, thirdly, another Evidence for the Divinity of the *Holy Spirit* ariſes from what has been already urged in Proof of his Perſonality, *viz.*

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[o] *See* Acts ii. [p] ——v. 3, 4. [q] Biſhop *Pearſon* in loc.

[r] Which is that founded on the double Meaning, as they call it, of the Verb ψεύδομαι, which may ſignify here, ſay they, to *counterfeit* (*viz.* Inſpiration.) The learned Reader may ſee this fully refuted by Biſhop *Pearſon* on ART. viii. and Mr. *Venneer* on ART. v. of the xxxix.

ART. VIII. *viz.* his Conjunction with the Father and the Son, in the Form preſcribed for Baptiſm. We are dedicated to Him, equally with the two other Perſons in the Bleſſed Trinity; and if thoſe two Perſons be confeſſedly Divine, it were ſurely greatly to derogate from their Dignity, to conjoin with them any *Creature*, the firſt and higheſt of which is by its very Nature very far removed from *Deity*. If farther, by being baptiſed *in the Name of*, be imply'd, being baptiſed into the Belief and Worſhip of thoſe Beings, as Commentators explain it,[s] and as the Practice of both the *Jewiſh* and (uncorrupt) *Chriſtian* Churches ſeem to juſtify, then is each of the Perſons really and truly *God*, or we are baptiſed into Idolatry; for the expreſs Command is, *Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only—.*[t]

Another and not leſs concluſive Proof, we are ſupply'd with from the Apoſtolical Benediction, contain'd in the Cloſe of his Second Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, *The Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghoſt, be with you.*[u] Which is evidently not ſo much a tender and benevolent Wiſh, as a formal and ſolemn Prayer. But Prayer is not due to, nor are Bleſſings of any Kind derivable from, any other Being than God, *from whom* only *every good and perfect Gift cometh.*[w]

To join a Creature with the Father and the Son in the ſame Invocation, were to offer them an unpardonable Indignity, at the ſame time that it argues a moſt groſs and palpable Abſurdity, to imagine that thoſe, to whom *Chriſt* ſhould have already imparted his *Grace*, and *God the Father* his *Love*, ſhould

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[s] *Baptizari*, &c. eſt Illi ad Cultum conſecrari, ut ab Illo, tanquam Domino ſuo denominetur. *Piſcator* in Mat. xxviii. 19.
[t] *See* Mat. iv. 10. [u] 2 Cor. xiii. 14. [w] James i. 17.

ſhould yet ſtand in need of, or receive any additional Happineſs from the *Communion* or *Fellowſhip* of any created and ſubordinate Being whatever. ART. VIII.

It cannot be improper to introduce here an Inſtance or two of the Sentiments of thoſe Perſons in this reſpect, who by their Nearneſs to the Apoſtolic Age (ſo as almoſt to be cotemporary with them) ought to have ſome Weight and Authority in the *Chriſtian* Church, among all ſucceeding Ages.

Thus then ſpeaks *Irenæus* before the Cloſe of the ſecond Century—"The Church, which was "planted throughout the whole World, received "of the Apoſtles, and their Diſciples, that Faith "which is in one *Jeſus Chriſt* the Son of God, "and in the HOLY GHOST, who ſpake by the "Prophets."[x] This is not the Faith of *Irenæus* only, but according to his Aſſertion of the whole preceding Church, and of the Apoſtles themſelves. Thus alſo *Tertullian* much about the ſame Time—*The* HOLY GHOST, *the third Name of the Godhead, and the third Perſon in the Order or Rank of the Divine Majeſty.*[y] And thus *Juſtin Martyr*, prior to either of them; *We worſhip, and adore the Prophetical SPIRIT.*[z] And again, *Acknowledging the Son of the true God himſelf, and placing him as next in Order, and then the PROPHETICAL SPIRIT — We will ſhew that we juſtly Honour THEM.*[a]

If to theſe Conſiderations we add, that the incommunicable Attributes of Divinity are aſcribed to the *Holy Spirit* by almoſt numberleſs Paſſages in the Holy Writings, and that ſuch Acts are alſo

[x] Adv. Hæreſ. l. 1. c. 2. [y] Adv. Prax. c. 30.
[z] Apol. 1. & 6. [a] Ibid. c. 16.

ART. VIII. aſſigned to him as are wholly inconſiſtent with any inferior Eſſence, the Thing will, I am perſuaded, ſtand beyond the reach of Diſpute—Thus the Prediction of future Events for Inſtance (which is one main Part of his Office) is an eſpecial Mark of Divinity, being the very Teſt by which God requires his People to try thoſe imaginary Deities they were inclined to worſhip— [b] *Let them bring forth and ſhew us what ſhall happen; let them ſhew the former Things what they be, that we may conſider them and know the latter End of them; or declare us Things for to come; ſhew the Things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are Gods.* Now if we conſider how very large a Share this has in the ſacred Books, how ſtrong, nervous, and particular are the greateſt Part of the Predictions, how many of them have been already accompliſh'd, and how nicely the Events have tally'd with theſe prophetic Accounts, we muſt ſoon diſcover the Nature of the Being from whom they are derived, and be ſatisfied that they are not of a Piece with the ambiguous Oracles of the Heathens, the fortunate Gueſſes of Men, the Deluſions of evil Spirits, or even the Relations of good Angels, who in this Caſe can do no more than gueſs; Fore-knowledge being as appears pertinent to no Character but that of the Deity.

But it is the conſtant Language of the Scriptures, that the *Holy Ghoſt* is the Author of all ſuch kind of Declarations — *Simeon* foreknew *that he ſhould not ſee Death, till he had ſeen the Lord's Chriſt* — but *it was revealed to him by the Holy Ghoſt*; [c]— thus again *the HOLY GHOST witneſſeth in every City* (ſays the Apoſtle) *ſaying, that Bonds and Afflictions*

[b] Iſa. xli. 22, 23. [c] Luc. ii. 26.

Afflictions abide me;[d] *thus ſaith the* HOLY GHOST, *ſays* Agabus: [e] But I forbear to urge more Inſtances of this Kind, as there will be a Sufficiency neceſſarily interwoven with my next Task, which is to ſhew what is the particular Office of this third Perſon of the ſacred Trinity; which is in an eſpecial Manner that of *Sanctification*: From whence he derives that Appellation, by which he ſtands diſtinguiſh'd from the other two Perſons in the Godhead. ART. VIII.

This he effects as well by revealing to us the Truths of Religion, as by forming and preparing our Hearts for the due Conſideration and Reception of thoſe Truths.

Firſt, The *Holy Ghoſt* reveals to us the Truths of Religion; for, [f] *The Prophecy came not in old Time by the Will of Man: but holy Men of God ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt*: In a Word, whatever Leſſons, whatever Inſtructions, whatever Threats, whatever Promiſes, whatever Predictions were given immediately by the Prophets and Apoſtles, are to be conſidered as coming mediately from him; they are not the Words of *Iſaiah*, of *David*, or of this or that Prophet, but —*Well ſpake the Holy Ghoſt, by* Eſaias *the Prophet, ſaying*[g] thus, or thus; *as the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, to Day if ye will hear his Voice*, &c.[h]

By him are we led to the Diſcovery of the Myſteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, as it ſignifies the Goſpel Diſpenſation; for he it is, who was appointed to *teſtify of* Chriſt; to *guide* his infant Church *into the Way of Truth*, to *teach them all Things*, and to *bring all Things to their Remembrance*,

[d] Acts xx. 23. [e] Ibid. xxi. 11. [f] 2 Pet. i. 21.
[g] Acts xxviii. 25. [h] Heb. iii. 7.

ART. VIII.

brance,[j] whatſoever *Chriſt* himſelf had before ſaid unto them.

But 2dly, the *Holy Ghoſt* prepares us for the Reception of thoſe Truths, operating both upon our Underſtandings and our Affections, enlarging our Hearts, and inſpiring us with a lively Faith, and a religious Hope: That [k] *Lydia attended unto the Things which were ſpoken by* Paul, was becauſe *the Lord had opened her Heart*; thoſe who were *added daily to the Church* were added[l] by the *Lord*; and laſtly, as *no Man ſpeaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jeſus accurſed*, ſo on the other hand can no Man *ſay that Jeſus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt*.[m]

Having by theſe Means taught us *what that good and acceptable Will of the Lord is*, He proceedeth, 3dly, to enable us to fulfil the ſame, by waſhing us from our natural Impurity; teaching us to ſubdue our innate Averſion to Good, and Proneneſs to Evil (in which our natural Corruption doth conſiſt) reſtraining us by a ſenſible Compunction from Acts of Wickedneſs (and that ſo forcibly, that it is with Difficulty that Men obſtinately bent on Sin do at laſt overcome the Check) inciting us to Virtue by repreſenting to us the amiable Effects of it; encouraging and promoting every little Motion of the Heart, which tends towards it, and giving his *Plaudit* to good Actions in an internal Satisfaction, and Complacency of Mind: In a Word, have we got the better of a Temptation, have we zealouſly apply'd to any Duty of our Religion, have we form'd any pious Reſolution, conquer'd any Doubts, maſter'd any Difficulty which impeded our Progreſs in Divine Knowledge?

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[j] John xv. 26. [k] Acts xvi. 14. [l] Ibid. ii. 47.
[m] 1 Cor. xii. 3.

Knowledge? — It belongeth not unto us, but must be aſcribed entirely to this Spirit, from whom we have received *both to will, and to do*,[n] and *without whom we are not able ſo much as to think a good Thought*.[o] ART. VIII.

I cannot cloſe theſe Conſiderations better than with St. *Paul*'s Account of the Character and Office of the *Holy Spirit*, which will ſupply us with ſome farther Proofs both of his *Perſonality* and *Divinity*, at the ſame Time that they give us a more extenſive View of his Power and Efficacy.

"To one is given by the Spirit the Word "of Wiſdom; to another the Word of Know- "ledge by the ſame Spirit; to another the Gifts "of Healing by the ſame Spirit; to another the "Working of Miracles; to another Prophecy; "to another diſcerning of Spirits; to another "divers Kinds of Tongues; to another the In- "terpretation of Tongues; but all theſe worketh "that one and the ſelf-ſame SPIRIT, dividing "to every Man ſeverally as HE will."[p]

Now altho' it appear that the *Holy Ghoſt* is God, as well as the *Father*, and the *Son*; altho' *we are compelled by the Chriſtian Verity to acknowledge every Perſon by himſelf to be God and Lord*, yet are we ſtrictly *forbidden by the Catholick Religion to ſay there be three Gods, or three Lords?*[q] As therefore the Doctrine of an Unity in the Godhead is moſt clear and peremptory, we are to conceive the three Perſons, being of the ſame Nature, the ſame Subſtance,[r] the ſame Authority, &c. are ſo united that the whole Triad conſtitute but one God.

[n] Phil. ii. 13. [o] Jam. i. 17. [p] 1 Cor. xii. 8, &c.
[q] Symbol Athanas.
[r] Καὶ ὑπόγυον δὲ δύο ἔχεις ἀπὸ τ ἀσπίδος τ ἀρειανῆς ἐγει-

ART. VIII. *How can theſe Things be?*[s] is a Queſtion that muſt be reſolved then only, when this Miſt of Fleſh, and its Frailties, ſhall be taken from before our Eyes—when we ſhall *ſee Face to Face*, and *know even as* we are *known:* Suffice it for the preſent that the Doctrine comes attended with ſuch Evidence, as (ſpite of all its Intricacy and Myſteriouſneſs) we cannot fairly or ſafely reject: For the reſt — let us curb our daring and impertinent Curioſity——*What is that to thee? follow thou me.*[t]

I conclude, as uſual, with a ſhort Review of the Whole: From which it appears, that the *Holy Ghoſt*, or *Spirit*, the Object by this Article propounded to our Belief, is not a mere *Form*, or *Quality* of God the Father, or any other Perſon, but a diſtinct and real *Perſon* himſelf; and that not a created, and ſubordinate, but a divine Perſon; really and truly God, and conſequently Con-ſubſtantial, Co-eternal, and Co-equal with the Father and the Son.

That He is the third Perſon in this ſacred Trinity, and together with the Father, and the Son, maketh up that great and incomprehenſible ONE GOD, who is the Object of our Adoration; that his

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ἐγεννήθησαν—λέγοντες εἶναι τὰς ὑποστάσεις τοῦ Πατρὸς, καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ, καὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος, καὶ εἶναι κεχωρισμένας. ἡμεῖς δὲ ταύτην παρειλήφαμεν, καὶ διδασκόμεθα, καὶ ταύτην ἔχομεν τὴν καθολικὴν καὶ ἀποστολικὴν παράδοσιν, καὶ πίστιν, καὶ ὁμολογίαν, μίαν εἶναι ὑπόστασιν τοῦ Πατρὸς, καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ, καὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος.

The Declaration of the Orthodox Biſhops againſt the *Arians* under *Conſtantine* the Younger: The Synod was held at *Sardica*, the Metropolis of *Dacia*, the beginning of the 4th Century. There were preſent 250 Biſhops.

Vide Theod. Eccleſ. Hiſt. l. 11. c. 7.

[s] John iii. 9. [t] John xxi. 22.

his eſpecial Office is that of *Sanctification*, and that He is not only HOLY in himſelf, but the Cauſe of all Holineſs, in all ſubordinate Beings; and to thus much does every one give his Aſſent, who ſays, in the Words of this Article, *I believe in the Holy Ghoſt.* ART. VIII.

ARTICLE

his especial Office is that of Sanctification, and that Article
He is not only HOLY in himself but the Cause, Will
of all Holiness, in all subordinate Beings; and to
thus much does every one give his Assent, who
ves, in the Words of this Article, I believe in the
Holy Ghost.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE IX.

The Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints.

ARTICLE IX.

The Holy Catholick Church, the Communion of Saints.

MATTH. xvi. latter Part of Ver. 18.

——*Upon this Rock I will build my Church, and the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.*

ART. IX.

THE Creed having exhibited in the eight former Articles every Thing neceſſary to be known and believed with reſpect to the ſacred Trinity, deſcends now to ſome Particulars which relate more immediately to ourſelves. Having ſufficiently view'd the Rock of its Foundation, we come now to conſider more attentively the Structure which is founded on that Rock.

The Article which falls under our preſent Conſideration runs thus:—*I believe the Holy Catholick Church, the Communion of Saints*; which ſeemingly conſiſting of two Parts, I ſhall follow that Method which I find to have been obſerved by other Expoſitors, and treat of them ſeparately: And here I ſhall inquire what is meant by the Term *Church*; and then why that Church ſtands characteriſed in our Creed by thoſe two Denominations of *Holy* and *Catholick*.

As for the Term *Church*, I need not obſerve that it is ſometimes applied to the Edifice or Building where *Chriſtians* aſſemble to celebrate Divine Service; The Word drawing its Original from

ART. IX. from the *Greek* Adjective κυριακη may be applied to any thing which is appropriate, dedicate, or belonging to the Lord; but in the Language of Scripture it conſtantly relates to the Worſhippers, ſometimes in a more narrow and contracted, ſometimes in a larger and more extenſive Senſe. The Company of *Chriſtians* in any particular City is called the *Church* of that City; thus the *Church of Corinth*, *the Church of Laodicea*, *Pergamus*, &c. Nay, even Aſſemblies in private Houſes are ſometimes thus dignified; as *the Churches in the Houſes of* Aquila *and* Priſcilla;[a] *the Church in the Houſe of* Nymphas;[b] *in the Houſe of* Philemon,[c] *&c.*

But all theſe Churches, however diſtinguiſhed and characteriſed, for particular Reaſons, are ſtill in Effect the ſame; the Church at *Corinth* was a Church of *Chriſt*; ſo were thoſe at *Jeruſalem*, *Antioch*, *Theſſalonica*, and wherever elſe the Doctrines of *Chriſtianity* had taken any Root: So that all theſe Churches, how many ſoever there were of them, conſtituted but one Church *Chriſtian*.— Whatever Hereticks ſtarted up, they were ſaid to make a Diviſion (σχίσμα) not in the Church of *Rome*, *Alexandria*, &c. but in the CHURCH in general: For they were ſo much the ſame, that *Whether one Member ſuffered, all the Members ſuffered with it; or one Member were honoured, all the Members rejoiced with it.*[d] THIS is the Church which falls under our preſent Conſideration, and not any particular Branch or Member, but the univerſal Aggregate of all thoſe who, in what Parts of the World ſoever diſperſed, hold the ſame Faith of *Chriſt*, in the Unity of the ſame Spirit. The Faith of *Chriſt* I ſay, becauſe I cannot agree with

[a] Rom. xvi. 5. [b] Col. iv. 15. [c] Philem. ii.
[d] 1 Cor. xii. 26.

with thoſe who would carry the Church intended in this Article back beyond the Promulgation of the Goſpel,[e]—even to the Beginning of the World: —I can readily believe that God always had a *Church*, that is, ſome one or more who believed, and worſhipped him conformably to his own Ordinances, from the firſt Hour of Creation, (as ſuch would have me to do)—I believe there was a *Noah* amidſt the general Corruption of the old World; —an *Abraham* in idolatrous *Chaldea*; a *Lot* in wicked *Sodom*; ſeven Thouſand in *Iſrael* who never bowed the Knee to *Baal*, even in the Days of *Ahab*;—and ſomewhere ſome truly pious and religious Men, even when Impiety ſeemed at its greateſt Height, as well in the *Jewiſh* Church, as in the other Parts of the World:——This, I ſay, I believe,—but it is more than I am required to believe by the Words of this Article: This Church, which I call *Holy*, and *Catholick*, was not named till within theſe 2000 Years:—There was a Time when it conſiſted of but very few Members; it was founded but in Twelve; its Conſtituents are reckoned but at one Hundred and Twenty at the Pentecoſt after our Saviour's Aſcenſion;[f] but being ſhortly after enlarged by the coming in of three Thouſand,[g] and by the daily Addition of *ſuch as ſhould be ſaved*, it thence-forward grew more and more *Catholick* every Day; and like the Waters of the Flood, at length covered the Face of the whole Earth. ART. IX.

Theſe Members, however diſtant from each other with reſpect to Time or Place, do yet conſtitute but one Church, for theſe Reaſons, *viz.* becauſe tho' many, and far removed from each other,

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[e] *Lightfoot*, and others. [f] Acts i. 15. [g] Ibid. ii. 41, 47.

ART. IX. other, they have yet but *one Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſm, and one Hope of their Calling*;[h]—*one Lord.* Although the different Branches of the *Chriſtian* Church have from Time to Time been under different Governors, yet is there but one *Lord of all, Chriſt Jeſus*; He, the Head of the whole Church *Chriſtian*, is but one; that Church therefore, which is his Body, can be but one. Although the different Members of a Body are diſtinguiſh'd by different Names, according to their reſpective Site, and Office; yet do they all conſtitute but one Body. They hold *one Faith*, namely, *that Faith, which was at firſt delivered to the Saints.*[k] They have *one Baptiſm*; being all baptiſed *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt*;[l] a Participation of the ſame Rites, and Sacraments; and *one Hope of their Calling*, even *the Hope of eternal Life.*[m] And ſuch, according to[n] *Tertullian*, can conſtitute but one Church; ſo that "Millions of Perſons, and Multitudes of "Congregations, being, by theſe Means, and "for theſe Reaſons, united into one Body, and "become one Church, by the Term *Church*, ex-"preſs'd in this Article, we are to underſtand a "Body or Collection of human Perſons, gathered "together in ſeveral Places of the World for the "Worſhip

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[h] Eph. iv. 4, 5.

[i] Καὶ μίαν εἶναι τὴν καθολικὴν αὐτοῦ ἐκκλησίαν βεβούληται. ἧς τὰ μέλιστα εἰς πολλοὺς, καὶ διαφόρους τόπους τὰ μέρη διήρηται, ἀλλ' ὅμως ἑνὶ Πνεύματι τοῖς τοῦ θείου βουλήμασι θάλπεται.

Euſeb. in Vit. Conſtant. Lib. III. c. 18.

[k] Jud. iii. [l] Matt. xxviii. 19. [m] Titus, iii. 7.

[n] Una nobis & illis Fides; unus Deus; idem Chriſtus, eadem ſpes, eadem Lavacri Sacramenta; ſemel dixerim una Eccleſia ſumus.

Tertull. de Veland. Virgin. c. 2.

"Worſhip of the ſame God, and united into the "ſame Corporation." [o] ART. IX.

Proceed we now to conſider by what Means, and in what Senſe this Church becomes an Object of our Faith. We are firſt to believe that ſuch a Church was founded originally by *Chriſt* and his Apoſtles, as the Scriptures do inform us. Now we know what early Attempts were made to ſuppreſs it in its Infancy; we know what various Methods were uſed both by Men and Devils to eradicate it during the three firſt Centuries; we know how many fell off into abominable Hereſies and Impieties; how many Thouſands ſealed their Teſtimony with their Blood; how many Arts were tried to blot out the *Chriſtian* Name from the Earth.—Yet are we to believe that all thoſe Arts were unſucceſsful, and fell ſhort of their Deſign; that ſpite of Hereſies, ſpite of Maſſacres, God, even in the worſt of Times, had ſtill a Church of true and faithful Servants. Scarce was the Sword wreſted from the Adverſary's Hands, when he began to work by [p] ſubtler Methods. Hereſies and Hereticks daily increaſed, Innovations daily crept in, ſo that at laſt, for the Space of almoſt 900 [q] Years together, there was the Appearance of a general Defection: Yet even then muſt we believe that Defection was only in Appearance; even then were there many worthy Confeſſors and Chriſtians

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[o] *Pearſon* in Art. ix.

[p] *Arius* began to broach his Hereſy almoſt immediately upon the Eſtabliſhment of Tranquillity in the Chriſtian Church, by the Emperor *Conſtantine*. [q] *Gregory*, who lived at the Cloſe of the 6th Century, is uſually ſtiled the laſt of the good Popes, and the firſt of the bad; however, from his Time to about the Year 1500, when the Reformation was ſet on foot by *Luther* and others, the weſtern Churches were in a Manner bury'd in Ignorance, Error, and Impiety.

ART. IX. Chriſtians fluctuating in that Sea of Impiety, tho' they had not Strength to emerge:—God had ſtill a *true* Church, tho' not always a *viſible* one. Yet further, notwithſtanding we do obſerve, as the latter Times approach, *the Love of many to wax cold*[r]——notwithſtanding the little Regard that is paid now-a-days to Religion; the prodigious Increaſe of Atheiſts and Infidels; the Multitudes of lukewarm, and indifferent Chriſtians; tho' all theſe Things bid fair for the Completion of our Saviour's Prediction, that, *when he cometh, he ſhall hardly find Faith upon the Earth*;[s] yet muſt we reſt in full Aſſurance that no Storms ſhall prevail ſo far as totally to overthrow that *Houſe* which our wiſe Builder hath *founded upon a Rock*. Thus doth the Church become properly an Object of Faith; and, eſpecially, as it is grounded on the Promiſe of God: There can, indeed, be none other Aſſurance of the Perpetuity of the Church, but what we have from him who built it; it is not of ſuch a Nature as would neceſſarily, once begun, ſupport itſelf for ever; for the refined Doctrines of *Chriſtianity* are too ill adapted to human Nature, conſidered merely as ſuch, without Divine Helps, to preſerve us in thoſe hard Leſſons of Self-denial, and the Contempt of offered Pleaſures; much leſs to carry us thro' the bitter Vale of Perſecution: We know that many Perſons, nay, whole Churches, have actually failed and apoſtatiſed; and ſo all might, had not the Providence of God ſupported them; and had not he who promiſed that *the Gates of Hell ſhould never prevail againſt* his Church, been always ready upon Occaſion to make good his Promiſe: So that it ſhould ſeem that to ſay, I believe

[r] Matt. xxiv. 12. [s] Luc. xviii. 8.

I believe the Church, were no more than this—I do fully confide in that Promiſe made to us (in the Perſons of the Apoſtles) by *Chriſt*, that *the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt* his Church, and that he will be *with us to the End of the World.* ART. IX.

Our great Founder promiſed to be *with us to the End of the World*,[t] and as *he is faithful who promiſed*, tho' we had a thouſand times greater Appearances of a general Apoſtacy than we have, (which God knows are much too great already) tho' Hell ſhould treble its Machinations for the Subverſion of the Church, and even tho' they ſhould in Appearance be attended with Succeſs; yet muſt we believe that this *Houſe on a Rock* ſhall weather out every Tempeſt, and be found ſtanding even in that Day when all Things elſe ſhall be deſtroyed.

And thus much will I think be ſufficient to ſhew what we mean by the *Church*, and what by *believing* it. A *Romiſh* Doctor will perhaps give you a different Account of both thoſe Particulars: And firſt making Nonſenſe of the Article itſelf, by changing the *Holy Catholick Church* into the *Holy* Roman *Catholick Church* (which is juſt as wiſe as to ſay, that *particular* and *univerſal*, that *a Part* and *the Whole*, are one and the ſame thing) will then tell you that by the *Church* is meant, either the Pope; or the Pope and his Council; or a Synod; or the Body of the *Romiſh* Clergy; or ſomething elſe, but what they could never ſettle: and that to *believe* in the Church, is to take their Words for whatever they pleaſe to tell us about Religion, how abſurd and ridiculous, nay how wicked and impious ſoever it may appear to our Reaſon, and even how contrary ſoever it be to the

[t] Mat. xxviii. 20.

ART. IX. Scriptures themſelves.—Juſt to mention this Interpretation, is in my Opinion to confute it: Both their Lives and Doctrines are too ſtrong Evidences againſt them, how far they are from being the Church of Chriſt, and how little they ought to be truſted!

But there is no ſuch Intention in the Article; it is far from enjoining a Faith in them, or in any Man, or Company of Men in the World: It does not ſo much as require us to ſay we believe *in* the Church, but barely that we believe *the Church*; that is, that we believe the Exiſtence of *the Church*; that it hath continually ſubſiſted from its firſt Foundation, now is, and ſhall continue to be, in ſpite of all Oppoſition, even to the End of the World.

From the *Church*, I paſs on to conſider the two Affections, which by the Words of the Article are attributed to it, viz. *Holineſs* and *Catholiciſm*: And firſt, let us ſee why that Church, in which there has been ſo little Appearance of Holineſs ſometimes for many Centuries together, muſt yet be perpetually acknowledged as having a Right to this Epithet of *Holy*.

In the firſt Place 'tis certain, that the Church of Chriſt has a Right to the Epithet of *Holy* from its Founder, who was moſt truly and eminently ſo. We know that thoſe Structures which lay claim to a Royal Founder, enjoy the perpetual Denomination of *Royal* Buildings, tho', ſo far from containing any thing that is royal within them, they be filled with nothing but Objects of Miſery and Poverty. The Church then would have an equal Claim to the Denomination of *Holineſs*, as thoſe Structures have to that of *Royalty*, even tho' her Members did every one of them correſpond as ill with her Title of Sanctity, as do thoſe of an Hoſpital

Hoſpital with that of Majeſty. But this Claim is much ſtrengthen'd, by ſuppoſing (as we are required to do) that many of the Members of the Church do in ſome Degree retain the ſame Affection with the Founder; as thoſe Houſes, which were both founded by Kings, and are ſtill inhabited by Kings, have a better Title to the Appellation of Royal Houſes, than thoſe, which only owing their Riſe to Majeſty have been ſince nothing but Receptacles for Vagrants and Lazars. ART. IX.

But ſecondly, the *Chriſtian* Church has an undiſputed Right to the Denomination of *Holy* from the Inſtitution, which how much ſoever it be abuſed, can never ceaſe to be both holy and perfect: God *called us with an holy Calling*,[u] and it was the Intent of our Inſtitution that *every one, who nameth the Name of Chriſt* ſhould *depart from Iniquity*;[w] it calls upon us to be *holy*; it points us out the Way to Holineſs if we be not holy, it is the Fault of ourſelves and not of our Foundation; by a Violation of its Ordinances we may abuſe this Inſtitution, but we cannot deſtroy the Inſtitution itſelf: *Chriſtians* may be uncharitable, but the Church of Chriſt is nevertheleſs a charitable Church; its Members may be unholy, but yet the Church itſelf is holy. Our Rites and Ordinances are both holy in themſelves, and of holy Origin; our Sacraments are holy; and laſtly, all thoſe Means, by which we are taught to hope to attain the End of our Calling, are blameleſs, holy, and undefiled: Aſſuredly then the Church of Chriſt, notwithſtanding both the Number and Groſſneſs of its Corruptions, has yet a Right to be called *holy*.

[u] 2 Tim. i. 9. [w] Ibid. ii. 19.

ART. IX.

The Evangeliſt calls *Jeruſalem* the *holy City*, even when it was upon the Brink of filling up the Meaſure of its Iniquities,[x] and ſo it was on many Conſiderations; as juſtly then at leaſt may we call the Church of Chriſt an *holy Church*, even tho' it were as deſtitute of holy Members, as the City of *Jeruſalem* was in the Days of *Herod* and *P. Pilate*.

But this is not all, for the Church here propounded as the Object of our Faith, is really and intrinſically Holy, as being only that Part of the viſible and ſuppoſed Church of *Chriſt*, which have kept themſelves free from thoſe Pollutions, which deform the reſt.

The Words of the Article do not intend to oblige us to profeſs a Belief that the whole Body of *Chriſtians*, which conſtitutes the viſible Church, has a Right to be called holy, in ſpite of Hereſy and Idolatry, in ſpite of Atheiſm and Impiety, in ſpite of Blaſphemy and all manner of Corruption: It does not tie us down to acknowledge that *all are Iſrael who are of Iſrael*; but that, however obſcured by the *Tares*, there is yet ſome good *Wheat* in the *Field*; a Company of holy and pious Men, who are truly the Church of God. This is the Church, to whoſe Exiſtence we are required to aſſent, which truly deſerves that Name, and exempts us from the Neceſſity of recurring to Figures and Emblems, to Compariſons and Conjectures, to fix its Claim to that Title which it apparently enjoys, *proprio & pleno Jure*, by a natural and inconteſtable Right.

Enough then of this Affection of *Holineſs*. The other of *Catholiciſm* ſeems to carry ſomething of greater Difficulty in it: Proceed we however to conſider why, in what Senſe, and for what Reaſons, that

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[x] Mat. iv. 5.

that Epithet alſo is attributed to the Church of *Chriſt.* ART. IX.

Catholiciſm (which is in *Engliſh* no more than *Univerſality*) is appropriate only to the univerſal Aggregate of Chriſtians; and the general Church of Chriſt is ſo called, to diſtinguiſh it firſt from the *Jewiſh* Church, which by its very Inſtitution was particular and confined: If the *Jews* took care to adhere to their Law themſelves, it was ſufficient; nor were they much required to extend or propagate their Doctrines beyond the Verge of their own Limits. But the Mandate to the Apoſtles is, that they ſhould *go teach all Nations*;[y] and the Leſſon to *Peter* was, that not the verieſt Heathen ſhould be held *common* or *unclean*, and therefore exempted from the Benefits of the Goſpel.[z]

Chriſtianity was never deſigned to be confined whithin the Bounds of *Judea*; or even of the extenſive Tract of *Aſia* itſelf, but to be ſpread, καθόλου, all over the World; and from thence the *Chriſtian* Church merits the Appellation of *Catholick*. But it is certain, that the principal Intention of this Epithet is to diſtinguiſh the Body in groſs from any of its Limbs or Members. The Church of *Jeruſalem* was a *particular* Church; the Church of *Rome*, the Church of *Alexandria*, *&c.* were *particular* Churches; and all theſe in Conjunction conſtituted the *Catholick Church*. And when *Catholiciſm* is aſcribed to any particular Church, as we find it ſometimes is, it is by a manifeſt Figure; a Part is expreſs'd by the Whole. If therefore we ſhould hear of the *Catholick Church of Smyrna*, the *Catholick Church of Alexandria*, or elſewhere, we are to conceive it to denote no more, than that the

y Mat. xxviii. 20. z Acts x.

ART. IX. Churches of *Alexandria, Smyrna, &c.* were in Unity and Communion with the Catholick or General Church of *Chriſt* all over the World.

Catholiciſm ſometimes forms an Antitheſis to Schiſm or Hereſy, and ſeems to be ſynonomous with *Orthodoxy*. It was frequently uſed in this Senſe by the Fathers,[a] and the Appellation of *Catholicks* is what they of the *Romiſh* Perſuaſion at this Day delight to diſtinguiſh themſelves by, from the Churches which *worſhip God after the Way which they call Hereſy*. But the Idea is ſtill the ſame: The *Orthodox* was called *Catholick*, as adhering to thoſe Points which were moſt generally received and acknowledged; the *Heretick* could not be *Catholick*, becauſe he flew off into ſome *particular* Doctrines, which affected only a Part, and ſometimes a ſmall Part too, of the univerſal Aggregate. And ſo much for the Word.

Our next Buſineſs muſt be to inquire how it belongs to the Church, and by what Means the Affection of *Catholiciſm*, which is moſt extenſive, is compatible with the other of *Sanctity*, which is, I am afraid, but too narrow and contracted. To aſſent to the Sanctity of the *Catholick Church*, as it means the whole Body of Men profeſſing the Faith of Chriſt, is what I can by no means apprehend to be required of us; and to call that Church which I make the Object of my Faith, and which ſometimes

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[a] In the Language of the third and fourth Centuries, *Catholick* and *Apoſtolick* are almoſt ſynonomous Terms, and have continued ſo ever ſince. Thus in the Confeſſion of the *Nicene* Fathers under *Conſtantine* — *I believe one Catholick and Apoſtolick Church*: Ἡ ὅλως ποιεῖν τι χωρὶς τῆς γνώμης τοῦ τῆς Καθολικῆς καὶ Αποστολικῆς ἐκκλησίας ἐπισκόπου —— ἐν τῇ Καθολικῇ καὶ Αποστολικῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ ὄντας, ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν, &c. *Theod.* Hiſt. Eccleſiaſt. lib. I. c. vi. —— Ἀναθεματίζει ἡ ἁγία Καθολικὴ καὶ Αποστολικὴ ἐκκλησία. Ibid. c. xii.

ſometimes conſiſts of a very ſmall Proportion of the Whole, by the Name of *Catholick*, as it means *univerſal*, implies too great an Abſurdity. ART. IX.

To reconcile theſe jarring Qualities however we muſt find ſome Way either to make the *Catholick* Church *Holy*, or the *Holy* Church *Catholick*; the firſt I am afraid will be too hard a Taſk for us; perhaps we may ſucceed better in the latter. Had the Article required us to pin our Faith upon any particular Church; had it required us to ſay I believe that God always had, and always will have an holy Church at *Jeruſalem*, at *Alexandria*, at *Rome*, in *Italy*, in *Britain*, *&c.* it had undoubtedly led us into an Error: For we verily believe that many of thoſe Churches, which ſubſiſted at the time this Creed was compoſed, have actually failed, and ſo might any other; for *Chriſt* never promiſed the Support of any *particular* Church, but only of the Church in general. Perhaps then the Force of the Article is this: I believe the Exiſtence of God's Church, not in this or that particular Place or Nation, but ſomewhere upon the Face of the Earth: I am uncertain whether there will always be an *holy Church*, a *Communion of Saints*, here or there, within the Pale of the *Romiſh* or the *Britiſh*, the *Gallican* or the *Ruſſian* Church; but I verily believe there is, and always will be one within the Pale of the *Chriſtian* Church, though not always in one Place, but ſometimes here, ſometimes there: It may fail in one Place as it riſes in another; nay in all Parts, one after another, it may alternately ceaſe and be renewed; but at no Inſtant of Time ſhall it ſuffer a total Ceſſation, or fail in all Parts together; but like the Sun when it withdraws its Beams from us, not ceaſe to ſhine, but form as bright a Day in other Worlds as once it did in ours. And for theſe Reaſons I call it a *Catholick* or general

ART. IX. Church, in Oppoſition to a confined and particular one.

Perhaps the Affection of Catholiciſm was even intended as a Fence againſt that very Evil which was however actually brought upon this Body of *Chriſt*, by one of its Members, *viz.* aſſuming the ſole Right of the Keys, and denying Salvation out of their own Pale, which is arrogantly done by the Church of *Rome*. And then the Article will run thus—I believe that in every diſtinct Church, or Society of Men, profeſſing the Faith of *Chriſt*, (however they may ſeem to differ one from another in leſſer Matters, provided they agree in the Eſſentials of Religion) there may be a Company of holy and pious Chriſtians: In a Word, I believe God may have a Church in *Britain*, or in *Ruſſia*, as well as in *France* or *Italy*.

I have above obſerved, that *Catholiciſm* often carries the Senſe of *Orthodoxy*; and is attributed to that Part of the *Chriſtian* Church which adheres to the primitive Faith, in Oppoſition to Hereticks and Innovators: This indeed ſeems to be almoſt the ſole Senſe, in which the Word has been uſed for many Centuries paſt. Now this Church may ſometimes be reduced within a very ſmall Compaſs, as it is evident from Hiſtory that it often has; and yet it will not loſe its Right to the Appellation of *Catholick*, for theſe Reaſons, *viz.* becauſe it perſiſts in the *Catholick* Faith, that Faith which was firſt preached to *all Nations*; which was deſigned to be univerſal, and was at firſt, no Doubt, univerſally acknowledged (*i. e.* by all *Chriſtians*);[b] becauſe

[b] According to that of *Liberius* to *Conſtantius*, ὦ διὰ τὸ εἶναι με μόνον, ὁ τῆς πίστεως ἐλαττοῦται λόγος: καὶ γὰρ καὶ τὸ παλαιὸν τρεῖς μόνοι εὑρίσκοντο ἀντίστατες προστάξει. *Theodoret.* Eccleſiaſt. Hiſt. Lib. I. c. xvi.

becauſe the Members of it are ſole Members of that Church which *Chriſt* laid the Foundation of, and to which only he gave the Promiſe of Univerſality, both with reſpect to Extenſion and Duration. ART. IX.

As to heretical Churches, they have ſometimes been very extenſive, and have ſubſiſted a good while; but out of that prodigious Number of Hereſies which have infeſted the Church of *Chriſt*, none could ever plead *Catholiciſm:* How few of them are now heard of! Many were cruſh'd in their very Birth; and the longeſt-liv'd of them all has ſlept and waked by Fits. They never were *Catholick* with reſpect to their Extent, for there never was a Time when the whole Body of *Chriſtians* were unanimous in any of their heretical Poſitions; nor with reſpect to Duration, for they were neither born with the Church of *Chriſt*, nor ſhall they die with it: It was ſome Time after *Chriſt* had erected a Church, before any of them was heard of:—Moſt of them are long ſince extinct; and not one of them but what ſhall ſo effectually ceaſe, as to be no more heard of. The true Church of *Chriſt* may plead *Catholiciſm* in both Reſpects: It was once *Catholick* in Extent, with reſpect to its own Members; when *the Multitude of them that believed were of one Heart, and of one Soul.*[c] It ſhall hereafter be ſo again; if not on Earth, yet at leaſt in Heaven. It is *Catholick* in Extent, in another Reſpect; for it certainly either hath been or ſhall be preached in every Corner of the World: And it is truly *Catholick* in Duration, as being founded on the Apoſtles, the firſt Converts, *Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief corner*

[c] Acts iv. 32.

ART. IX. *corner Stone*, as ſupporting itſelf in an uninterrupted Succeſſion from Age to Age, and as never to have a Period even when the World itſelf ſhall ſuffer a Diſſolution.

Foraſmuch then as this Church has ſometimes been very contracted, it appears that a very ſmall Number may yet conſtitute a truly *Catholick Church*, and conſequently that that *holy Church*, which I make the Object of my Faith in this Article, may be ſuch, notwithſtanding I have ſuppoſed it to be but a ſmall Part of the univerſal Aggregate of thoſe who ſeemingly profeſs the Faith of *Chriſt*.

Upon this Hypotheſis then the Article will run thus: I believe there always hath been, from the firſt Hour of the *Chriſtian* Inſtitution, and always will be to the End of the World, a Company of holy Men, adhering ſtedfaſtly to that Faith which was firſt preached by *Chriſt* and his Apoſtles (and which was deſigned to be univerſal, both with reſpect to Duration and Extent) without Hereſy, Alteration, or Innovation; and that the *true* Faith of *Chriſt* ſhall never be totally abſorbed, and loſt even in Hereſy, any more than that the Profeſſion of *Chriſtianity* in general ſhall be utterly eradicated by Perſecution, or any other Means whatſoever.

Having conſidered the Word *Catholick* in two or three Senſes, differing ſome Way from each other, the Matter is now which we ſhall fix upon as moſt pertinent to the reſt of the Article. Perhaps we ſhall come neareſt the Truth if we connect them all together; which I ſhall therefore venture to do, and give my Senſe of this Article in the following Terms.—I believe in general, that the *Chriſtian* Diſpenſation is of an univerſal Nature, and that God, who formerly confined the true Knowledge of himſelf to one People, ſuffering himſelf to be worſhipped under various Forms

Forms by the reſt of the World, hath now ordained that all Mankind ſhould be united into one Church, under *Jeſus Chriſt:* I acknowledge this Church to be, both from its Founder, and from the Nature of its Inſtitution, *holy:* I acknowledge it further to be univerſal, as well with reſpect to Duration as Extent; fully confiding in that Promiſe of its bleſſed Founder, that he will be *with it to the End of the World*; and that *the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it*, ſo as utterly to eradicate and deſtroy it; and notwithſtanding that the Behaviour of the groſs Body of *Chriſtians* has been oftentimes ſuch as to forfeit its Claim to the Affection of Sanctity, I do verily believe, that there always hath from its firſt Foundation ſubſiſted, and always ſhall to the End of the World ſubſiſt, a Church, which is truly and intrinſically *holy:* A Company of pious Men, profeſſing the Religion of *Chriſt* in its native Purity, and adhering ſtedfaſtly to that *Faith which was firſt delivered to the Saints*, and which is in its Nature, and ought to be in its Obſervance, *Catholick.* I do not however confine this to any diſtinct or particular Church, either by ſuppoſing it to ſubſiſt *only* in one Member of this Body, excluſive of the reſt; but in the Body in general: Or even *perpetually* in one Member, *together* with the reſt, many of which I know have been lop'd off, and many more of which may poſſibly ſuffer the ſame Fate; but that ſomewhere or other, though I cannot pretend to ſay where, *Chriſt* will never want a true, faithful, and obedient Church. And thus I believe the *Holy Catholick Church.* ART. IX.

I come now to the ſecond Portion of this Article, *the Communion of Saints*, which we are told bears a later Date in the Creed than the former; which Conſideration, among others, has often tempted

ART. IX. tempted me to think, that theſe Words were only intended as an Elucidation of the foregoing, as though they meant to point out to us what that *Holy Church* conſiſted of, *viz.* a Company of Saints, or pious Men, in Communion with each other: But perhaps this is doing too much Violence to the Word κοινωνία; for which Reaſon, taking it in its uſual Senſe, I ſhall conſider what can be imply'd by it in the Article before us.—But it will be proper to inquire firſt who are the *Saints*, and when that is known we ſhall the more eaſily perceive wherein their *Communion* doth conſiſt.

For the ſame Reaſons that the univerſal Church of *Chriſt* has a Right to the Epithet of *Holy*, every Member of it lays claim to the Denomination of *Saint*; it was formerly therefore given indiſcriminately to the whole Body.

The Apoſtles were a Company of *Saints*, tho' there was a *Devil* even among them: [d] That Faith which was by them firſt preached throughout the World, is called the *Faith, delivered to the* SAINTS, though doubtleſs there were many *Devils* Partakers of the Diſpenſation; and the *Chriſtian* Churches were called the Churches of the *Saints*, even at a Time when they were infeſted with many flagrant Hereſies and Impieties: The *Church* was called *holy*, becauſe it was intended to be ſuch; its Members were called *Saints*, becauſe they ought to have been ſuch: But as *that* was not the *Church*, ſo neither are *theſe* the *Saints*, with whom our preſent Concern lies. The *Holy Church* of this Article is (as I have ſhewn) not barely nominally, but really and truly *holy*; ſo likewiſe are its *Saints*, not titular, but real *Saints*. Now by the Tenour of

[d] *Judas*, vide John vi. 70.

of the Goſpel it appears, that they only are to be rank'd in that Claſs, who are *ſanctified by Chriſt Jeſus*; (we are all called to be *Saints*, but they only are ſuch, who are obedient to that Calling) and who therefore are holy both with reſpect to their Faith, perſiſting ſtedfaſtly in that ſacred Rule firſt deliver'd to, and by the Apoſtles: And ſecondly, with reſpect to their Converſation, herein endeavouring to imitate him who called them, that as he is *holy*, ſo may they alſo be *holy*, in all Manner of Converſation; abounding in every good Gift, and *adding to their Faith Virtue, and to Virtue Knowledge; and to Knowledge Temperance; and to Temperance Patience; and to Patience Godlineſs; and to Godlineſs brotherly Kindneſs; and to brotherly Kindneſs Charity.*[e] ART. IX.

Theſe are the *Saints* of the Church of *Chriſt*, and theſe are the *Saints* on which we are required by the Article before us to turn our Attention. The former Part of the Article directed us to aſſent to the Exiſtence of ſuch *Saints*; this requires us to believe, that thoſe *Saints* have *Communion*, or Fellowſhip—with whom I come now to conſider.

Firſt then, ſuch *Saints* have *Communion* with God;—with all the Perſons in the ſacred Trinity. There is a conſtant Intercourſe between them; they imparting to the *Saint* their ſacred Gifts, the *Saint* dedicating to them himſelf, his Soul, his Life, his Affections, and maintaining his Part of the Commerce in uninterrupted Prayers and Praiſes: There is a *Communion* of Love:—*He that loveth me ſhall be loved of my Father, and I will love him*;[f] and an Union of the moſt intimate Nature, for the

[e] 2 Pet. i. 7. [f] John, xiv. 21.

ART. IX. the Body of the *Saint* is not only the *Temple of the Holy Ghoſt, which dwelleth in him,*[g] but with him will the Father and the Son alſo *come, and make their Abode:*[h] There is a *Communion* of Will; the *Saint* knowing none but that of his Creator:—Of Manners; the *Saint* ever exerting his utmoſt Endeavours to frame his Converſation by that glorious Model. And laſtly, there is in ſome Sort a Communion of Nature, by that *Spirit of Adoption* which the *Saint* hath *received*; he hath *Communion* of Inheritance with the Son, being *joint Heir with Chriſt*;[i] he claims a Right of Son-ſhip in God, crying *Abba Father*,[k] and ſo *exceeding great and precious* are his *Promiſes*, as *by theſe* he even *becomes Partaker of the Divine Nature*.[l] Such is the *Communion of Saints* with reſpect to God.

They have *Communion* with the holy Angels;—their Affections are the ſame, their Deſires, their Converſation is the ſame;—the Angels rejoice when that holy Corporation is increaſed;—*there is Joy*[m] among them at a *Saint's* Creation; and no doubt there is equal Sorrow at his Defection.

Their Studies are the ſame, being alike deſirous to *look into* thoſe ſublime Myſteries contained in the holy Goſpel:—Their Converſation is the ſame, being but one continual round of Devotion and Charity; of Piety and brotherly Love; of Thankſgiving to God, and mutual Benevolence to each other. With theſe alſo there has been ever a *Communion* of Intercourſe, as is ſufficiently apparent from the ſacred Hiſtory; and by the Apoſtle the Angels are expreſsly ſaid to be *miniſtring Spirits*,

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[g] 2 Tim. i. 14, &c. [h] John, xiv. 23. [i] Rom. viii. 17. [k] Ibid. 15. and Galat. iv. 6. [l] 2 Pet. i. 4. [m] Luke xv.

rits, ſent forth to be Miniſters for them who ſhall be Heirs of Salvation.[n] ART. IX.

Laſtly (and which I take to be chiefly intended in this Article) the *Saints* have *Communion* with each other.

They are Partakers of the ſame holy Rites and Ordinances; they have one common Faith, one common Intereſt, one common *End of their Calling*, and one common Means of attaining that End. They conſtitute but one Body, united under one Head, *Chriſt Jeſus*; they have a *Communion* of Love and Charity, being ſo cloſely compacted, that no Kind of Senſation can affect a Part, without at the ſame Time affecting the Whole; but *whether one Member ſuffer, all the Members ſuffer with it; or one Member be honour'd, all the Members rejoice with it.*[o] However diſtant they be, there is ſtill an holy Intercourſe between them; the *Saints* continually praying, not *to*, but *for* each other:—They are compacted together by the moſt endearing Ties; thoſe of Friendſhip and Brotherhood: They are Brethren in *Chriſt Jeſus*: A Band more inviolable than even that of Nature: Many Things may diſſolve the latter, but the former is indiſſoluble: There may be a Time when it is the *Saint*'s Duty to look upon his *natural* Brother as an *Heathen Man or a Publican*;[p] but no Plea can warrant his withdrawing his tendereſt Affection from *the Saint*, his *ſpiritual* Brother: Friendſhip between *Man* and *Man* is fragil, precarious, and imperfect; between *Saint* and *Saint* conſtant, unbounded, and inviolable. The Communion of Friends, the Communion of Brethren, how perdurable ſoe[illegible] is at leaſt diſſolved by

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[n] Heb. i. 14. [o] 1 Cor. xii. 26. [p] Matt. xviii. 17.

ART. IX. by Death; the Communion of *Saints* is ſuperior even to that Stroke, and enjoys a perpetual and uninterrupted Exiſtence: For the Foundation of this Communion being immutable, the Communion itſelf muſt be immutable alſo: The *Saint*, who dies to the World, is yet alive unto *Chriſt*; and even with him the *Saints*, who are yet on Earth, have ſome Sort of Communion; being under the ſame Head, governed by the ſame Laws, and Heirs of the ſame Promiſes.—Their Affections are the ſame; their Converſation is the ſame; and in a Word, they differ from each other in little elſe but in Place; for which Reaſon, Commentators have aptly compared their *Communion* with that of *Members of the ſame civil Society upon Earth, when they are in a foreign Country, far diſtant from each other*;[q] though I think it will be better repreſented by the *Communion* of a Metropolis, with the ſeveral Colonies detached from it, and founded upon the ſame Conſtitutions.

They who ſuppoſe a *Communion* of Intercourſe, carry it, I doubt, much too far. Their Communion of Love can reach no farther than Wiſhes; 'tis certain they are well affected to us, but as certain that they have no Power to aſſiſt or relieve us in any Sort of Calamity, either ſpiritual or temporal: It is not certain that they pray for us; but certain it is that they are abſolutely inſenſible of any Petitions made to them for that Purpoſe. The Prayers which were exerted for each other by the Saints, while yet together upon Earth, are wholly converted into Praiſes; they who continue here bleſſing God for his abundant Goodneſs in enabling thoſe departed to persevere unto the End, and to attain

[q] *Wake* on the Catechiſm, p. 68.

attain unto the Promiſes; they in Heaven praiſing him, as for themſelves, ſo for that Grace which he vouchſafes to beſtow upon his Saints, yet militant upon Earth, whereby there is that happy Proſpect of their being ſhortly received into the ſame glorious Society with themſelves. "What "elſe they do in Heaven in relation to us on "Earth particularly conſidered, or what we ought "to perform with regard to them, beſide a reve- "rential Reſpect and Study of Imitation, is not "revealed unto us in the Holy Scriptures, nor can "be concluded by neceſſary Deductions from any "Principles of Chriſtianity."[r] ART. IX.

I ſhall now venture to take leave of this Part of the Article, and with it of the Article itſelf; conceiving that theſe Obſervations, how brief ſoever, are yet ſufficient to prevent the Chriſtian from being ignorant what he ought really to intend, when he profeſſeth a Belief of the *Communion of Saints*. [s] "For thereby he is conceived "to expreſs thus much:—I believe that ſuch Per- "ſons as are truly ſanctified in the Church of "*Chriſt*, while they live among the crooked Ge- "nerations of Men, and ſtruggle with all the "Miſeries of this World, have Fellowſhip with "God the Father, God the Son, and God the "Holy Ghoſt, as dwelling with them, and taking "up their Habitations in them; that they par- "take of the Care and Kindneſs of the bleſſed "Angels, who take Delight in the Miniſtration "for their Benefit; that beſide the external Fel- "lowſhip which they have in the Word and Sa- "craments with all the Members of the Church, "they have an intimate Union and Conjunction

[r] *Pearſon* on Art. ix. [s] Ibid. Concluſ.

ART. IX. " with all the Saints on Earth, as the living " Members of Chriſt : Nor is this Union diſſolved " by the Death of any ; but as Chriſt, in whom " they live, is the Lamb ſlain from the Founda- " tion of the World, ſo have they Fellowſhip " with all the Saints, who have ever departed in " the true Faith and Fear of God, and now enjoy " the Preſence of the Father, and follow the " Lamb whitherſoever he goeth. And thus I " believe the *Communion of Saints.*"

AN

APPENDIX

TO

ARTICLE IX.

CONTAINING

An ATTEMPT towards a more free and rational Explication of

The Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints.

Οὐδεὶς μικρόψυχος εἰσίτω. BURNET.

APPENDIX

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An ATTEMPT towards a more free and
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APPENDIX

TO

ARTICLE IX.

IN the Illuſtration of this, as of the other Articles, I have hitherto followed the Plan of former Expoſitors, which has however obliged me to give ſuch an Account of it, as I cannot myſelf entirely acquieſce in. Conſidering the general State of the *Chriſtian* Church from almoſt the firſt Hour of its Foundation to the preſent, there doth not appear to have been an Interval, when thoſe two Affections aſcribed to it by the Creed, have been *fairly* compatible; and all Attempts to reconcile thoſe jarring Qualities of *Sanctity* and *Univerſality* have (in my Opinion) only occaſioned a conſtrained and unwarrantable Interpretation of the Terms. 'Tis too evident that the Church in general (much leſs the *Holy* Church) hath as yet been far from being *univerſal*: The *Profeſſion* of *Chriſtianity* hath been confined to leſs than a Moiety of the World; Sincerity in that Profeſſion, Purity of Life and Manners, Uniformity in Doctrines and Opinions, to a much narrower Compaſs. From hence Expoſitors have been obliged to recur to *partial* and figurative Conſtructions, to diſtant and even ſometimes forced Interpretations, in order to ſupport their *Hypotheſis* with Arguments, the moſt ſpecious of which tend at beſt to prove, that the Church *may*, rather than

that it neceſſarily *muſt* be term'd at once both *Holy* and *Catholick*. Of this Sort are thoſe which I have already urged, and which I have uſed my beſt Endeavours both to examine and to place in the faireſt Light poſſible, as well for my own Satisfaction as my Readers.

But ſtill I think we are ſhort of the Mark; and as in Scripture we ought not to recede from the *Letter*, without apparent Neceſſity, why may not the ſame Rule obtain here? Why ſhould we quit the full and genuine Senſe of a Word, for one partial and emblematical, when it may with Safety and Conſiſtency be adhered to?

Suppoſe then we can find a State or Time when the Whole of this Article, in the plain and literal Meaning of the Words, ſhall be found to be ſtrictly true; when this complicated Affection ſhall belong to the Church of *Chriſt*, by a juſt and unqueſtionable Right; when both the *Holy* Church ſhall be *Catholick*, and the *Catholick* Church ſhall be *Holy?* Ought we not rather to direct our Attention to that, than to any other Period wherein we meet with the leaſt Difficulty or Obſtruction? In a Word, the great Miſtake ſeems to lie in referring that to either paſt or preſent, which belongs ſolely and entirely to Futurity.

For if there be any Force in Words; if there be any Dependance to be had on the ſacred Writers, either under the old or the new Diſpenſation, we are certainly to expect, even on this Side Heaven, a State, an Age, a Period in which the Church of *Chriſt* ſhall appear in a Form, in all Reſpects greatly tranſcending any it has hitherto enjoyed; when *Her Prieſts ſhall be cloathed with Righteouſneſs and Salvation, and her Saints ſhall ſhout aloud for Joy*;[1] when *Mercy and Truth* ſhall meet

[1] Pſalm cxxxii.

meet together, when *Righteouſneſs and Peace* ſhall *kiſs each other*;[2] when the *Holy* FEW ſhall be no longer hid and obſcured amidſt a Sea of Iniquity, no longer ſeem an undiſtinguiſh'd Handful in the midſt of a wicked and idolatrous World, no longer be contracted within ſo narrow a Compaſs, as that even their Exiſtence ſhall ſeem precarious and uncertain; but ſhall *ſhine forth as the Sun* at once with the moſt conſpicuous and diffuſive Glory; when, in ſhort, *The Earth ſhall be filled with the Knowledge of the Glory of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea*;[3] and the Church of *Chriſt* ſhall become at once ſo abſolutely *Catholick*, that there ſhall be no longer Occaſion for a Man *to teach his Neighbour, or to ſay unto his Brother, Know ye the Lord; for they ſhall* ALL *know him, from the leaſt even to the greateſt*:[4] And ſo univerſally *Holy*, that EVERY ONE *who is left in* Zion, *and who remaineth in* Jeruſalem, *ſhall be called* HOLY; *even* EVERY ONE *who is written among the Living in* Jeruſalem.[5] Here then muſt we ſeek that *Church*, which is at once the Object of our Wiſhes and of our Faith; that *Kingdom of God*, whoſe *Coming* we daily pray for; and that *Communion of Saints* we long ſo ardently to be joined to. But it will be well worth our while to take a more comprehenſive View of this glorious and remarkable Period.

To trace the Declaration of it indeed through all its Stages, were to go very far back in the Holy Scriptures, ſince 'tis certain that it was not abſolutely unknown in the firſt Ages: There are very many Paſſages in the Writings of the *Royal Pſalmiſt*, which have an evident Tendency this Way;[6] and

[2] Pſalm lxxxv. [3] Iſaiah, xi. 9. [4] Jer. xxxi. 34. [5] Iſaiah, iv. 3. [6] *See* particularly Pſ. xxi. xxiv. xlv. xlviii. lxviii. lxxxv, and cx.

ſome obſcure Alluſions, ſome faint and diſtant Hints, may be met with even in the Books of *Moſes*: But as the Prophets were principally employed in this great Diſcovery, I ſhall at preſent carry my Appeal no higher than to the foremoſt of theſe, *viz. Iſaiah*, who from the Part he bears in uſhering in the enſuing Diſpenſation under the *Meſſiah*, has acquired the Title of the *Evangelical Prophet*. *It ſhall come to paſs* (ſays he) *in the laſt Days, that the Mountain of the Lord's Houſe ſhall be eſtabliſhed in the Top of the Mountains, and ſhall be exalted above the Hills, and all Nations ſhall flow unto it; and many People ſhall go and ſay, Come ye, and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, to the Houſe of the God of* Jacob; *and he will teach us of his Ways, and we will walk in his Paths; and he ſhall judge among the Nations, and rebuke many People, and they ſhall beat their Swords into Plowſhares, and their Spears into pruning Hooks; Nation ſhall not riſe againſt Nation, neither ſhall they learn War any more.*[7] This is evidently one of thoſe numerous Prophecies which relate to the abſolute Univerſality of *Chriſt*'s Kingdom, the two diſtinguiſhing Characteriſticks of which are *Righteouſneſs* and *Peace*; which it were moſt abſurd to ſay have at any Interval of Time as yet ſo *kiſſed each other*, as to come up to thoſe ſtrong, nervous, and pathetick Terms, in which that glorious State is every where, and on all Occaſions delineated. But let us ſee what the Prophet can offer further:—*Behold* (ſays he) *a King ſhall reign in Righteouſneſs, and Princes ſhall rule in Judgment; the Eyes of thoſe who ſee ſhall not be dim, and the Ears of thoſe who hear ſhall hearken; the Heart alſo*

7 Iſaiah, ii. 2, 3, 4.

alſo of the Raſh ſhall underſtand Knowledge; Judgement ſhall dwell in the Wilderneſs, and Righteouſneſs remain in the fruitful Field.[8] Again, *The Glory of the Lord ſhall be revealed,* and ALL *Fleſh ſhall ſee it* TOGETHER.[9] Again, after a moſt beautiful and pompous Deſcription of that happy *Theocracy*, 'tis added alſo as an expreſs Characteriſtick, that *The People ſhall be* ALL RIGHTEOUS; *the Branch of God's planting; the Work of his Hands, that he may be glorified.*[1] Again, *It ſhall come to paſs, that from one new Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, ſhall* ALL FLESH *come to worſhip before me, ſaith the Lord.*[2] Thus far *Iſaiah.* But who can point out an Age, a Day, an Hour, as yet elapſed, when he could truly ſay all was thus? Who yet has taſted of the Bleſſings of that mild and happy Reign? Alas! all hitherto has worn a very different Face; the Conflux of the Nations has been rather to deſtroy, to overwhelm, than to enlarge the Church; the *Work of Righteouſneſs* hath been too ſeldom *Peace*, and its *Effect* much oftner Miſery and Sorrow, than *Quietneſs and perpetual Aſſurance.*[3] 'Tis evident that we have as yet ſeen but the faint Dawnings of that *Dominion* which is to extend *from Sea to Sea, and from the River unto the Ends of the Earth.*[4] By much the larger Moiety of the World hath hitherto lived either exempt from this Law, or in a State of Rebellion and Diſobedience to it; and the diſtinguiſhing Privileges of the Subjects of *Chriſt* have as yet been little elſe but Hatred, Ignominy, Miſery, Perſecution, and Martyrdom. But this is

[8] Iſaiah, xxxii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 16. [9] Ibid. xl. 5. [1] Ibid. lx. 21. [2] Ibid. lxvi. 23. *See alſo* ch. xi. xxxiii. 17, *&c.* xxxv. liv. 13, 14. lxv. and lxvi. [3] Iſaiah, xxxii. 17. [4] Pſalm lxxii. 8.

is by no Means ſuch a Kingdom as was ever promiſed to the royal *Branch* of the Houſe of *David*. Either then the Prophets have greatly exaggerated the Thing in their Deſcriptions; either the Picture is drawn much ſtronger than Life (which is not at all conſiſtent either with the Genius of the holy Writings, or the Juſtice and Veracity of God) or there yet remains an higher Diſpenſation, a brighter Kingdom, a far more illuſtrious Period of the Church's Glory than ſhe hath as yet been ſuffered to enjoy. But let us proceed to other Teſtimonies:—The Prophets *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel* evidently point out the ſame Period coincident with the future Reſtoration of *Iſrael*: Then is the Lord to *judge between his fat Cattle and his lean Cattle, and to cauſe the* EVIL BEASTS *to* CEASE *out of the Land, and to ſave his Flock, and to make them to dwell ſafely under one Shepherd, even his Servant* David.[5]

Micah concludes his Deſcription of it (in all Reſpects parallel to that of *Iſaiah*[6]) with obſerving, that *in that Day* ALL *People will walk, every one in the Name of his God; and we alſo* (evidently alluding to the Reſtoration of *Iſrael*) *will walk in the Name of the Lord our God for ever and ever.*[7] By much the greateſt Part of the third Chapter of *Zephaniah* is employed to the ſame Purpoſe; and to conclude, *It ſhall come to paſs* (ſaith *Zechariah*) *that in all the Land, ſaith the Lord, two Parts therein ſhall be cut off, and die, but the third ſhall be left therein, and I will bring the third Part through the Fire, and refine them, as Silver is refined; and will try them, as Gold is tried: They ſhall call on my Name, and I will hear them; I will ſay it is my*

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5 *See* Ezek. xxxiv. *See alſo* Jer. xxxi. 38, *&c.* l. 20. and Ezek. xxxvi. xxxvii. 6 Ch. ii. 7 Mic. iv. 5, *&c.*

my People, and they ſhall ſay the Lord is my God.[8] All which Paſſages do apparently lead us to the Expectation of a State of Glory and Peace, of *Righteouſneſs* and Salvation; in a Word, a State truly and entirely correſponding to the venerable and expreſſive Title of an HOLY CATHOLICK CHURCH. 'Twere endleſs to tranſcribe all which occurs on a Topic which engroſſes ſo large a Share in the prophetical Writings. In ſhort, we can ſcarce turn our Eye on any Part of them but it is ſtruck with ſomething which has a Tendency this Way: In what Light they are to be conſider'd, (not to mention at preſent the almoſt unanimous Interpretation of the primitive Fathers) the *Holy Ghoſt* ſeems himſelf to have inſtructed us; for *we* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *according to his Promiſe, look for new Heavens and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth* RIGHTEOUSNESS.[9] From whence it is evident, that thoſe Prophecies had not received, at leaſt, their final Completion (as ſome would perſuade us) in the firſt Promulgation of the Goſpel, and calling in of the *Gentiles*; for both theſe Circumſtances were actually paſt, and the Goſpel Diſpenſation had taken place for ſome Time: Nevertheleſs, this alſo ſhall in ſome Meaſure be done away, and *we expect new Heavens*, &c. *according to his Promiſe*. But where are we to trace this Promiſe but in the above-cited remarkable Paſſages? And what are we to conceive by an *Earth* inhabited by *Righteouſneſs*, but a *Church* purged from its preſent groſs and numerous Abominations, univerſally clean, pious, HOLY, and in a Word, compoſed of a pure and entire *Communion of Saints?*

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[8] Zech. xiii. 8, 9. *See alſo* Dan. vii. 4., Hab. ii. 4. Zech. ii. 11. xiv. 4, &c.

[9] 2 Pet. iii. 13.

That ſuch a Period as this then is due to the Church of *Chriſt* ſeems too plain to be denied; but when or where to take place is Matter of ſome Diſpute even among thoſe who are nevertheleſs agreed with regard to the Thing in general: But that it certainly will at ſome Time or other, is quite ſufficient for our Purpoſe; and whenever it does, the Church of *Chriſt* will be ſtrictly and truly, in the full and genuine Senſe of the Words (what it never hath been yet) both HOLY and CATHOLICK. Give me Leave however in the mean Time to proceed to ſome Conſiderations, which may give a further Light, both into this and the remaining Part of the Article.

St. *John*, as he was to cloſe the Succeſſion of Prophets, ſeems to have been appointed to repeat ſuch of the ancient Prophecies as were yet to receive their Completion, with ſuch farther Illuſtration as the ſhorter Diſtance of their approaching Periods render'd neceſſary; and this remarkable Diſpenſation, ſo far from being forgot, ſeems rather to have engroſs'd the Whole of his *Revelation*. In a Word, what glimmer'd in the Writings of *Moſes* and *David*; what we *ſaw as through a Glaſs darkly* in the Prophets, this Apoſtle ſeems to have ſhewn us *openly, without a Parable*, and *Face to Face*.

After a conciſe but clear Deſcription of ſuch remarkable Particulars as were ſucceſſively to take place, in order to uſher in that glorious Œconomy, "I ſaw (ſaith he) an Angel come down from "Heaven, having the Key of the bottomleſs Pit "and a great Chain in his Hand; and he laid "hold on the Dragon, that old Serpent, which is "the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thouſand "Years, and caſt him into the bottomleſs Pit, "and ſhut him up, and ſet a ſeal upon him, that "he

" he ſhould deceive the Nations no more, till the " thouſand Years ſhould be fulfilled: And I ſaw " Thrones, and they ſat upon them, and Judg- " ment was given unto them. And I ſaw the " Souls of thoſe who were beheaded for the Te- " ſtimony of *Jeſus*, and for the Word of God, " and who had not worſhipped the Beaſt;—— " and they lived and reigned with Chriſt a thou- " ſand Years. But the reſt of the Dead lived not " till the thouſand Years were finiſhed."[1] At the End of this happy *Millennium* ſucceeds the ſecond and general Reſurrection, when *the Dead both ſmall and great* ſhall ſtand *before the Throne, and* ſhall be *judged out of thoſe things which are written in the Books, according to their Works.*[2] The happy Interim however is evidently the *new Heavens* and *new Earth* of *Iſaiah*,[3] the *latter Days* of the Prophets,[4] the ἀποκατάστασις,[5] the παλιγγενεσία,[6] the ἀνάψυξις[7] of the Goſpel, and the *Seculum aureum* of the Heathens.[8] The attendant Circumſtances are too plainly parallel, the Likeneſs and Conformity too ſtrong, for us not to ſee that they are one and the ſame thing. But I do not look upon it as any Part of my preſent Taſk to enter upon Arguments in Proof of this, or to engage you to prefer a plain, literal, rational, and conſiſtent Interpretation of the Apoſtle's Words, before one full of Confuſion, Myſtery, and Uncertainty: The clear and convincing Manner, in which this is already done to my Hands,[9] renders

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[1] Apoc. xx. 1, 2, *&c.* [2] Ibid. 12. [3] Iſ. lxv.
[4] *See* the ſeveral Texts already cited. [5] Acts iii. 21.
[6] Matt. xix. 28. [7] Acts iii. 19. [8] *See Burnet's* Theory of the Earth, B. iv. c. 5.
[9] *See* Burnet's *Theory of the Earth*, B. iv. c. 3, 4, 5, and the ſame Author *on the State of the Dead*, &c. ch. ix. in both which Treatiſes the Thing is ſupported with ſuch ſtrong and rational

renders it wholly unneceſſary, and leaves me no further Buſineſs, than to try of what Uſe the Diſcovery may be to our preſent Purpoſe. Let us inquire therefore what will be the particular Privileges of that happy State, who the Partakers of it, and what its diſtinguiſhing Characteriſticks. Attend then once more to the Prophet—"I ſaw "(ſays he) a new Heaven and a new Earth, for "the firſt Heaven and the firſt Earth were paſſed "away, and there was no more Sea. And I *John* "ſaw the holy City, new *Jeruſalem*, coming down "from God out of Heaven, prepared as a Bride "adorned for her Huſband: And I heard a great "Voice out of Heaven, ſaying, Behold the Ta-"bernacle of God is with Men, and he will dwell "with them, and they ſhall be his People, and "God himſelf ſhall be their God; and God ſhall "wipe away all Tears from their Eyes, and there "ſhall be no more Death, neither Sorrow, nor cry-"ing, neither ſhall there be any more Pain."[1] Happy, happy People! and not only *Bleſſed* but *Holy is he who hath a Part in the firſt Reſurrection.*[2] As a peculiar Mark of Honour to this *Bride of the Lamb*, it is granted that ſhe ſhall be *arrayed in fine Linen clean and white*; a beautiful and expreſſive Emblem of the *Righteouſneſs of the Saints.*[3] Here then at laſt are *Mercy and Truth met together*; here *Righteouſneſs* and *Peace* embrace; all is Joy and Piety, Holineſs and Happineſs; for *The Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of his Chriſt.*[4] Who now can well withold himſelf

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rational Arguments, as may almoſt be ſaid to amount to a Demonſtration. *See* alſo *Mede on the Revelations.*

[1] Apoc. xxi. 1, 2, &c. [2] Ibid. xx. 6. [3] Ibid. xix. 8.
[4] Apoc. xi. 15.

himſelf from crying out with equal Joy and Surpriſe, Behold the long promiſed Kingdom of the Son of *David*; behold his univerſal Dominion in a truly CATHOLICK Church. Nor can we turn our Eyes on the Companions of that happy Reign (the *noble Army* of all thoſe who had been *beheaded for the Teſtimony of Jeſus, and for the Word of God; and who had not worſhipped the Beaſt, neither had received his Mark upon their Foreheads or in their Hands*;[5] *of thoſe who have come out of* THE *great Tribulation, and have waſhed their Robes, and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb*,[6] whom the Lamb ſhall therefore make *Kings and Prieſts*, and they *ſhall reign* ON THE EARTH;[7]) without exclaiming—Here is indeed A COMMUNION OF SAINTS, a bleſſed, unmixed Society of the Juſt, enjoying univerſal Harmony, and a free and uninterrupted Intercourſe with God their King and Saviour, the holy Angels, and each other.

I am by no Means apprehenſive that this will be conſider'd as an irrational Account of the Words before us; the uſual Explications of them are evidently languid, and unſatisfactory, and in many Reſpects loaded with Difficulties apparently inſurmountable, without impoſing an unwarrantable Conſtraint upon the Terms; thus much is I think almoſt univerſally complain'd of by the Reader, and in a great Meaſure acknowledged by the Expoſitor: Such Conſiderations may ſurely therefore be deem'd ſufficient Motives to engage us in the Search of a more diſengaged and rational Explication, and to pave the Way for one which is free and conſiſtent, and every Way correſponding to the Idea, which is naturally conveyed by the Terms in which the Article

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5 Ibid. xx. 4. 6 Ibid. vii. 14. 7 Ibid. v, 10.

Article is expreſſed. I cannot help thinking that ſuch is the Hypotheſis, which I have advanced; but the grand Difficulty will be to gain Admittance for it in general, and to ſhew a Probability that the Compilers of the Creed had any ſuch Thing in view at the Time of their inſerting the Article. Here the Diſtance of Time, and the different Gloſſes of Commentators varying, as they were ſwayed by Education, Prejudices, or Intereſt, leave us no Recourſe but to Conjecture: Nevertheleſs it may be practicable to bring ſuch *probable* Evidence even from that Quarter, as may amount, tho' not to *mathematical*, yet at leaſt to *moral* Certainty, and rational Demonſtration. Let us however for a Moment diveſt ourſelves of Prejudice and Partiality; and with a Mind unbiaſs'd and anxious only after Truth, on which Side ſoever as yet conceal'd, addreſs ourſelves to the Attempt.

It is not certain of how long ſtanding is this Article, or even the Creed itſelf; but certain it is that they are both very ancient; perhaps much more ſo than is imagined, ſince no one has been able to trace them fairly to their firſt Riſe. We can by no Means be certain that the firſt Time we heard of it was the firſt Time of its Appearance: The Creed itſelf might be compiled and this Article ſubſiſt in it, long before an Expoſition might be thought (or could indeed be) neceſſary.

Suppoſe then with ſome we carry the Date of this Creed back as far as the Apoſtles, and imagine it to have been compiled by them in Council, for the Uſe of their Converts, which was for a long while the prevailing Opinion; their Writings give Demonſtration that there were among them *Millenarians* as we are called; ſome who firmly expected ſuch a State of the Church as has been here deſcribed upon the Plan of the Prophets.

St. *Peter*

St. *Peter* and St. *John* have both ſpoke pretty plain to the Purpoſe ;[8] and if St. *Paul* had any Share in it, we want not Hints of his Sentiments in the Affair.[9] If it were compiled at any Time after, within the firſt Century, St. *John* lived to ſee that out, and was moſt probably conſulted, if he had not the chief Hand in it. In the ſecond Century we find firſt *Papias*, Biſhop of *Hierapolis*, who is with good Reaſon ſuppoſed to have been an immediate Diſciple of St. *John*, both clear and ſtrenuous in the ſame Sentiments; and there is certainly this Advantage to be drawn from his Teſtimony, that having been a Hearer and Companion of that very Apoſtle, who gave the laſt and moſt perfect Account of it, he may very reaſonably be ſuppoſed to have been better acquainted with his Maſter's Senſe and Intention, than that he ſhould miſtake it in ſo groſs a Manner, as ſome would perſuade us he has done.

Papias was not then the Inventor of this Doctrine, as the Enemies of it would inſinuate; for there was an Apoſtle who taught it, and his Maſter before him: For *Irenæus*, a Scholar of *Papias*, and a zealous Champion for the *Millennium*, affirms, that he imbibed thoſe Notions from *thoſe Elders, who had converſed with the Apoſtle St.* John, *and received it directly* from him, as (adds he) he alſo had

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[8] See the Paſſages already refer'd to.

[9] See 1 Cor. xv. 23, 24. where there is evidently an *Intervallum* between the Reſurrection of *thoſe who are Chriſt's*, and what he afterwards calls *the End* (the Period of Chriſt's Reign on Earth which is to fill that Interval) almoſt parallel with *Apoc.* xx. 4, 5. See alſo 1 Theſſ. iv. 16, 17. and particularly Rom. viii. 21. which has this Senſe poſitively aſſign'd to it by *Tertullian*.

received it from THE LORD.[1] And we find, that before this the Heretick *Cerinthus* had been cenſured among others (not for inventing, but) for *judaizing* this State, for filling it with groſs Carnalities and Impurities; in a Word, for making a mere *Mahometan* Paradiſe of it: (and by the way, this ſame Paradiſe is evidently founded on the Doctrine of a *Millennium*, but much diſguiſed and corrupted, agreeable to the degenerate Opinions of ſome looſe Chriſtians of that Age, who, for want of proper Inſtructions, had given a looſe to their own wild Imaginations.) But to return; as *Papias* was not the firſt, ſo neither was he the only one in this Opinion; for *Euſebius* confeſſes, that he was followed in it *by many of the principal Men in the Church*;[2] nay, if we may take *Juſtin*'s Word, by the whole Body of the Orthodox:[3] And even St. *Jerom*, one of the ſtricteſt Oppoſers this Doctrine ever met with, is obliged to acknowledge, that he cannot *allegorize thoſe Prophecies which relate to it in the Manner he would, without contradicting the general Opinion of the primitive Fathers.*[4] Nay, he goes further; he declares his Apprehenſions of the Reſentments of Multitudes even of his Co-temporaries, on Account of his Attempts to eradicate this Opinion.[5] *Papias*, as I have obſerved, was followed by *Irenæus*, a Man of remarkable Learning, Induſtry, and Sagacity; and in the ſame Century, and prior to

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[1] Quemadmodum Preſbyteri meminerunt (qui *Joannem* Diſcipulum Domini viderunt) audiſſe ab eo; quemadmodum de *Temporibus illis* DOCEBAT DOMINUS. Iren. contr. Hæreſ. c. 33.

[2] B. III. c. 33. [3] Dial. cum Tryph. [4] Si *ſpiritualiter* diſſerimus, multorum Veterum videbimur Opinionibus contra ire. Procem. in L. 18. Comment. in *Iſ.*

[5] Ibid.

to *Irenæus*, by that indefatigable Soldier of *Chriſt Juſtin Martyr*. Let him ſpeak for himſelf: "I "indeed (ſays he) and as many as are in all Points "true and orthodox *Chriſtians*, are aſſured of a "future Reſurrection of our Fleſh, and a thouſand "Years Happineſs in the new and beautiful *Je-* "*ruſalem*, agreeable to the unanimous Doctrines "of *Ezekiel*, *Iſaiah*, and the reſt of the Prophets."[6] And afterwards, in order to explain himſelf further (but with great Modeſty, as conſidering to whom he was addreſſing himſelf) he adds, "One "of our Church, whoſe Name was *John*, an "Apoſtle of *Chriſt*, had foretold a thouſand "Years Continuance of the Faithful with *Chriſt* "in *Jeruſalem:* After which is to ſucceed the ge- "neral, and (if I may ſo call it) *everlaſting* Re- "ſurrection of all Men, and the Judgment."[7] Thus far *Juſtin:* To him we may add *Melito*, Biſhop of *Sardis*; *Apollinarius*, who wrote in Vindication of *Irenæus* in this Point againſt *Dionyſius* of *Alexandria*; the Author of the *Epiſtle of St. Barnabas* (whoever he was); and in ſhort, an Army: But let us paſs on to the next Century, where we find *Victorinus*, *Nepos*, *Cyprian*, and others, Men of Learning and Authority, and Biſhops of conſiderable Churches; and among the reſt the ever memorable *Tertullian*, and that too, by all Accounts, long before he was betrayed into thoſe Errors which brought upon him the Cenſures of the Church: We have unfortunately loſt that moſt valuable Tract, which was profeſſedly upon the Subject;[8] nevertheleſs we have enough to ſpeak for him: *We acknowledge* (ſays he) *the Hopes of even a terreſtrial Kingdom; not under the preſent*

[6] Dial. cum *Tryph.* [7] Ibid. [8] De Spe Fidelium.

State of Things, but in the Heaven-born (Cœlo delata) Jeruſalem *for a thouſand Years.—This the Prophet* Ezekiel *was acquainted with, and the Apoſtle* John *had a View of.*[9]

I ſhall cloſe the Evidence with *Lactantius*, who ſpends almoſt a whole Book[1] on it; where he all along treats it as a Doctrine of equal Weight and Certainty with the reſt of the *Chriſtian* Inſtitutions; and at the Cloſe of the Tract, *This* (ſays he) *is what the holy Prophets teach, and we* Chriſtians *believe; this is our Philoſophy*, &c.[2] But we are obliged to *Lactantius* for more than his Teſtimony; even for a ſubſtantial Reaſon why the Thing was not then more publickly and univerſally taken notice of, and for a probable Conjecture why the Doctrine was at laſt for a while in a manner diſcontinued: for "We do not indeed (ſays he) "uſe to aſſert or maintain this Doctrine in a pub-"lick Manner, it being the Command of God, "that we ſhould in Peace and Silence incloſe this "his Myſtery in our Hearts, and not engage in "uſeleſs Diſputes with thoſe, who for Contention, "and not for Inſtruction's Sake, raiſe Cavils "againſt God and his Religion.— A Myſtery "requires to be faithfully concealed, eſpecially by "us, who are emphatically called the *Faithful*. "Yet our Adverſaries interpret this our Silence "for Guilt, *&c.*"[3] Thus we ſee the Doctrine of a *Millennium* was probably not confined to thoſe who made publick Profeſſion of it; and for aught we know there might be (as I verily believe to be the Caſe at preſent) Thouſands of very conſiderable Perſons in the Church, Champions for it, whoſe Names have been never tranſmitted to

9 Adverſ. Marcion. 1 De Vita Beata. 2 Ibid. 3 Ibid.

to us as ſuch: In ſhort, during the three firſt Centuries the Thing was in a manner general,[4] and at the laſt it was rather ſilenced than exploded. By reaſon of the Diſputes it occaſioned on the one hand, and the Miſtakes on the other; that ſome flatly oppoſed it, and too many others of the inconſiderate Sort were too apt to corrupt and *carnalize* it, it was thought proper to follow *Lactantius*'s Hint, and that every Man ſhould for the future enjoy his happy Expectation *in Peace and Silence*. Thus ſlept, not died, the Doctrine of a *Millennium*. However, 'tis by no Means either impoſſible or improbable that an Opinion, which had ſo long, and ſo univerſally prevailed in the Church; which had borne ſo large a Share in the Hopes, Belief, Words and Writings of ſo many of its Members, and been patronized by Apoſtles, apoſtolical Men, Confeſſors and Martyrs, ſhould find a Place in ſome of their *Confeſſions of Faith*; (rather very improbable is it, that a Point by them eſteemed of ſo much Importance, ſhould be wholly neglected) not impoſſible that ſuch a one may be this very Confeſſion now before us; or at leaſt that this remarkable and myſterious Article, (which, I think, according to the uſual Interpretation of it, hardly carries Weight enough to be made a diſtinct Article of Faith) may have been transferred from ſuch into this Creed, at a Time

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4 If we may credit *Gelaſius Cyzicenus*, the *Nicene* Fathers were all of the ſame Opinion, as appears from the following Declaration: "We expect new Heavens and a new Earth, "agreeable to the ſacred Writings, when the Kingdom of "the great God and our Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt* ſhall appear." Then (as ſaith *Daniel*) the SAINTS *ſhall receive the Kingdom of the moſt High, and the* EARTH *ſhall be pure,* HOLY, *the Land of the Living, and not of the Dead,* &c. Hiſt. Concil. Nic.

when its genuine Intention was not thoroughly underſtood, or (if I may be allowed the Expreſſion) grown obſolete, and out of Faſhion. Thus far however I muſt think certain, that we have by the Help of this Hypotheſis a much leſs intricate and conſtrained Solution of this Article, than any of thoſe which are uſually given us. What Reception it will meet with is yet uncertain: I have only to requeſt that it may be examined (if poſſible) without Paſſion or Prejudice, and then I am ſure there will be found at leaſt one Thing *right* in it, *viz.* the Intention. What I have here offer'd is to be conſider'd only as the Draught or Out-lines: If this Hint ſhould have the good Fortune to be approved, it will give me a very ſenſible Pleaſure to ſee it purſued, and perfected by an abler Pen; but if after all, ſuch Objections ſhall be found to lie againſt it, as that it may by no Means be admitted, I ſhall only ſay it were heartily to be wiſhed that it might. In the mean while, the Genius of the preſent Age in a Manner obliges me to diſmiſs this Eſſay with the very Reflection of St. *Jerom (Tempora mutantur!)* when with a trembling Hand[5] he firſt ventured to engage on the oppoſite Side of the Queſtion: *Ut præſaga Mente jam cernam quantorum in me Rabies concitanda ſit.*[6]

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[5] Quæ licet non ſequamur, tamen *damnare non poſſumus*, quia multi Eccleſiaſticorum Virorum et *Martyres* iſta dixerunt. Hieron. in Jerem. ad c. xix. 11. [6] In Procœmio ibid.

ARTICLE X.

The Forgiveneſs of Sins.

ARTICLE X.

The Forgiveness of Sins.

ARTICLE X.

The Forgiveneſs of Sins.

ACTS x. Ver. 43.

To him give all the Prophets witneſs, that through his Name whoſoever believeth in him ſhall receive Remiſſion of Sins.

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THIS is the Doctrine expreſsly propounded to us by the tenth Article of our Creed, which requires a Belief of *The Forgiveneſs of Sins.* For the proper Illuſtration of this Article, it will be requiſite that I conſider the following ſeveral Particulars, *viz.*

I. What is to be underſtood by the Term *Sins.*

II. What is implied by the *Remiſſion* or *Forgiveneſs* of them: And

III. How ſuch Remiſſion becomes a proper Object of our Belief.

The general Definition of Sin is, that it is the Tranſgreſſion of a Law; and every one who is guilty of the Violation of even an *human* Conſtitution, may with reſpect to that be called a *Sinner.* But by the Term *Sin* we ſeldom underſtand any thing elſe than the Violation of the Ordinances of the ſupreme Legiſlator God,—the Tranſgreſſion of that *Law*, to which all Men are by their very Natures obnoxious, and the Obligation of which is both perpetual and univerſal. For *had it not been for the Law* (ſaith the Apoſtle)

I had

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I had not known Sin:[a] For where there is no *Law* there is no *Tranſgreſſion*: Had there been no Prohibition againſt Murder and Adultery, Murderer and Adulterer had not been Names of Infamy; nor had we known Concupiſcence, *except the Law had ſaid—Thou ſhalt not covet.*[b] Therefore as *whoſoever committeth Sin, tranſgreſſeth the Law*;[c] ſo on the other hand, whoſoever tranſgreſſeth the Law, committeth Sin.

That there hath always been in force a Law, containing a Rule of Action for Mankind, is not neceſſary for me to prove: Such a one hath been promulged *at ſundry Times, and in divers Manners*; the Volumes of it are yet extant, with their Vouchers indelibly impreſs'd upon every Page of them; and thoſe who have wanted this have yet always had *a Law written in their Hearts*; *their Conſcience bearing witneſs* to the Fitneſs or Unfitneſs of an Action, *and their Thoughts in the mean while accuſing or elſe acquitting them.*[d]

Whatſoever is oppoſite or contradictory to this Law, whether by the *Commiſſion* of any thing which is by that prohibited, or by the *Omiſſion* of any Duty which is by that enjoin'd, ſuch Action or Omiſſion conſtitutes the Perſon ſo offending a Sinner, and is that particular Kind of Guilt which we are to underſtand by the Term *Sin.*

Now as neceſſarily as a Law implies Sin, ſo neceſſarily alſo does Sin imply Puniſhment; *i. e.* the Perſon offending againſt this Law becomes neceſſarily obnoxious to the Reſentments of the Legiſlator, and ſubject to ſuch Puniſhment as is annexed to that Guilt, or as he the ſaid Legiſlator ſhall think proper to inflict: For without ſuch a Sanction the

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[a] Rom. vii. 7. [b] Ibid. [c] 1 John, iii. 4. [d] Rom. ii. 15.

the moſt ſolemn Laws would have very little Force, and their Precepts muſt carry more the Air of the Admonitions of a Friend, than of the Ordinances of a Lawgiver: In which Caſe the Legiſlator would but expoſe his Laws to Contempt, and himſelf to Affronts and injurious Treatment. ART. X.

That *Sin*, or the Violation of the Laws of God doth render the Perſon ſo offending obnoxious, or liable to Puniſhment, will therefore more fully appear from the following Conſiderations.

Firſt, God had an undoubted Right to make ſuch Laws. We acknowledge the Authority of a Prince to form ſuch Conſtitutions and Orders for the Government of his Subjects, as he thinks proper: We ſubmit to the Right of a Maſter to propoſe his own Laws to his Dependants; and we readily acquieſce in the Regulations preſcribed by a Father to his Children: We agree that each of theſe may juſtly expect Obedience to his particular Injunctions, provided at leaſt that they do not claſh with the prior Inſtitutions of any ſuperior Legiſlator.

A *deſpotic* Prince, or other legiſlative Corporation, whether *ſole* or *aggregate*, may equitably impoſe on the Subject any Rule, the Obſervance of which may conſiſt with the Obſervance of the Laws of God. A Maſter or Father has the ſame Privilege with reſpect to his Family, provided he do not infringe upon thoſe Laws, nor the *civil* Conſtitutions, to which he himſelf alſo is ſubject. Now what the Prince is to his People, what the Maſter to his Family, and what the Father to his Children, that is God to the whole Race of Mankind;—the King, the Maſter, and the Father of us all. From him we derive not only the Contingencies of *Being*, but *Being* itſelf: From him as from one common Parent, are we all deſcended; and

ART. X. and thoſe whom we call our *Parents* here are no other than the Channels through which the Principles of Life are convey'd to us from him: His Dependants are we for every thing by which this Life is ſupported.[e] *As the Eyes of a Servant look up to the Hand of his Maſter* for his Subſiſtence, *even ſo do our Eyes wait upon the Lord our God; gathering* then only *when he giveth, and when he openeth his Hand being filled with Good.* And for the Right of Sovereignty 'tis plain, that none can be more abſolute than that which is implied by Creation.—*The Potter hath Power over his Clay.*—God then as a King, as a Maſter, and as a Father, has a Right to command, and we as Subjects, Servants, and Children, are indiſpenſably bound to obey:[f] For this Obligation is both perpetual, and ſuperior to all others: We may be many Ways releaſed from our Ties of Duty to an earthly Prince, or Parent; but God is our King, and Father for ever; nor is there any Kind of Ordinance which ought to take place of his, but in all Things, where the Injunctions laid on us by a temporal Power do claſh or interfere with thoſe we have received from him, *we ought to obey God rather than Man.*[g]

Now

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[e] Pſ. cxxiii. 2. civ. 28. [f] The *Mahometan* Doctors eſtabliſh the Doctrine of Man's univerſal Dependance on God by a very whimſical Tradition.—When *Adam* was firſt created (ſay they) God aſſembled together the whole future Race of Mankind in the Form of Ants, in a ſpacious Valley called *Nomân*, and there, in the Preſence of *Adam* and the Angels, obliged them all to ſwear Fealty to him, which they readily and chearfully did; upon which God again diſmiſs'd them, telling them, that he had now ſufficient Witneſs againſt them, in caſe they ſhould at any Time withdraw their Obedience.

[g] Acts, v. 29.

Now the extreme Purity and impartial Juſtice of this Legiſlator forbid us to ſuppoſe that his Laws can be violated with Impunity; for there do not ſubſiſt any two Things, between which is ſo great a Contrariety as between God and Sin. Every Sin therefore being a Contradiction to his Will, as well as an Affront to his Authority, cannot but awake his Reſentments; and Juſtice requiring that ſome Diſtinction ſhould be made between the Obedient and Diſobedient, while the former naturally pleaſes himſelf with the Expectation of Reward, the latter muſt as naturally tremble with the Apprehenſions of Puniſhment. ART. X.

But it hath pleaſed God to ſtrengthen and confirm this natural Impreſs by the moſt expreſs and poſitive Declarations; and while the higheſt Honours are ſet before, and promiſed to the faithful, and obedient Obſerver of this Law, the ſevereſt Vengeance is denounced againſt the hardy and impenitent Violator of it. Whoever therefore *ſinneth*, or infringeth upon this Law, becomes neceſſarily from that Inſtant liable or obnoxious to ſuch Puniſhment as the Legiſlator may in Juſtice inflict: He thenceforward ſtands in the Relation of a Debtor to God, and muſt pay the Forfeiture whenever he ſhall think proper to demand it.

Now it appears, that this is the real Caſe of Mankind in general: *All have ſinned, and fallen ſhort of the Glory of God:*[h] Our firſt Parent was diſobedient to the very firſt Command which was laid upon him, and thereby brought a Stain upon all his Poſterity for ever: TheDenunciation againſt him was, *In the Day that thou eateſt thereof thou ſhalt ſurely die.*[i] The whole Race of Mankind was

[h] Rom. iii. 23. [i] Gen. iii. 17.

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Death then (ſays the Apoſtle) *reigned from* Adam *to* Moſes, *even over thoſe who had not ſinned after the Similitude of* Adam's *Tranſgreſſion*; [k] *i. e.* over all the Poſterity of *Adam* (excluſive of none) for two thouſand five hundred Years together: But within that Space of Time we find many Men who were acknowledged to be *perfect in their Generations*. There was an *Abel*, an *Enoch*, a *Noah*, an *Abraham*, &c. theſe were ſuch as confeſſedly *did not ſin after the Similitude of* Adam's *Tranſgreſſion*, but *walked with God*, and received his Teſtimony to their Righteouſneſs: Yet even theſe were not exempt from that Yoke which is the *Wages of Sin*, to which it is certain they could not have been ſubject had not *Sin laid at their Door*: From the Guilt of actual Diſobedience they ſtand *in general* acquitted; ſo that we are under a Neceſſity of placing the Whole to the Score of that which they, with the reſt of Mankind, had derived from their common Progenitor. But,

Secondly, The frequent Emotions which attend the very Dawn of Life—our early Thirſt to tranſgreſs beſpeaks a Corruption inherent in our Nature, and interwoven with our very Conſtitutions. A Propenſity to Vice is co-æval with us, and even then, when we were too young to feel the

[k] Rom. v. 14.

the Influence of either Precept or Example, began that fatal *Law in our Members* to commence Hoſtilities *againſt the Law of our Mind.*[l] What are we to call this but the Remains of that unhappy Blemiſh contracted by our firſt Parents, and by them perpetuated to their Poſterity? ART. X.

Thirdly, The Deſcendants of *Adam*, had they not been affected by his Guilt, had not been ſo ſtrongly affected by that Part of the Puniſhment of it, which was to take immediate place: *Adam* was juſtly devoted to *Death*; but *Abel* and *Seth* might have been immortal for any Offence of their own; the Ground was curſed for *Adam*'s Diſobedience; but why muſt his *righteous* Children ſhare in thoſe Labours which were the Reſult of that Malediction? *Eve*'s Puniſhment was perhaps excellently adapted to the Nature of her Offence; but will God afflict her *innocent* Daughters with the ſame Sorrow? No ſurely: could there have been yet ſuch a Thing as Innocence all might have been well, and Parturition itſelf as eaſy as Nature firſt intended it,[m] and the righteous Man might even yet have expected a plentiful and ſpontaneous Harveſt. Thus from the Effect we trace the Cauſe, and read all Mankind's Guilt in their Puniſhment; for *ſhall not the Judge of all the Earth do right?* And right it is, that they who drank ſo largely of the poiſon'd Draught, who received Corruption for their Inheritance, ſhould be Heirs alſo of the Miſeries which flowed from it.

It

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[l] Rom. vii. 23.

[m] Which, as Anatomiſts ſay, is by the Conſtruction of the human Body much more eaſy in Nature than in any other Species of Animals: That it always is attended therefore with ſo many more Sorrows, Difficulties and Dangers, is evidently præternatural, and the Conſequence of that Malediction pronounced on *Eve*.

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It is in this View, *viz.* with reſpect to the general Influence he had over Mankind, that the firſt Man is repreſented as a proper and ſignificant Type of the Meſſiah.* *All* were affected by the Righteouſneſs of *Chriſt*, and conſequently *all* had been affected by the Unrighteouſneſs of *Adam*; otherwiſe there lies no Kind of Similitude between the former and the latter *Adam*, and the Apoſtle (which God forbid) has given us a falſe Repreſentation of the Caſe.

Thus by one Man's Diſobedience the whole World (οἱ πολλοι[n]) *were made Sinners.* For that this original Corruption hath in it the true and formal Nature of Sin, is too evident from theſe Conſiderations; firſt that it conſiſteth in a continual Propenſity to Evil, which is the ſame Thing as a continual Oppoſition to the Will of God; and ſecondly, that it is every where ſet in that Light by the Holy Scriptures.

That *the whole World, both* Jews *and Gentiles, are under Sin*;[o] that *there is none righteous, no not one*;[p] that *all have ſinned, and fallen ſhort of the Glory of God*, &c. are general Aſſertions; not the moſt upright that ever breathed are excluded, nor even the Infant, whoſe narrow Term of Life gave him no Opportunity for the Commiſſion of *actual* Sins: And if ſuch be Sinners, it muſt be on the Score of that original Pollution inherent in their Natures. It is further added, that we are by our very Natures *the Children of Wrath*;[q] that is, born under Condemnation; which Condemnation is undoubtedly founded on Sin, but could not poſſibly paſs on all Men[r] for any Offence of their own,

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* *See* Rom. v. 19. 1 Cor. xv. 22. [n] *See* Dr. *Bentley*'s Sermon on *November* 5. [o] Rom. iii. 9. [p] Ibid. 10. [q] Eph. ii. 3. [r] Rom. v. 16, 18.

own, before they were capable of committing any, and muſt therefore neceſſarily reſult from the Offence of that *one*, in whom *all* were then included. ART. X.

Nor was this by any means a novel Doctrine of the Apoſtle; for it had long ſince been Matter of Affliction to the royal Pſalmiſt, that he *was ſhapen in Iniquity, and in Sin did his Mother conceive* him: [s] And the Man, to whoſe perſonal Righteouſneſs God had himſelf given his own ſacred Teſtimony,[t] had to an Acknowledgment of his own Guilt in this reſpect ſubjoined this poſitive and univerſal Aſſertion, that *There is no Man free from Pollution, even though his Life be but a Day long.*[u]

How can theſe Things be? Nay, rather how can they be otherwiſe? Can the Stream run clear, whoſe Fountain is polluted. —How ſtrongly are our Forms, our Features, our Diſtempers, our very Particularities communicated to our Children! What Wonder then, that a Corruption which ſunk ſo deep into the Nature of our firſt Parent, ſhould, together with the Principles of that Nature,

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[s] Pſ. li. 5. [t] *See* Job, i. 8.

[u] This Paſſage, which we do not find *ad Verbum* any where throughout the Book of *Job*, is cited thus by St. *Clement*; and is either his Interpretation of מי־יתן טהור מטמה לא אחד אם רוצים ימיו *Job*, xiv. 4, 5. Agreeable almoſt to the Septuagint. τίς γὰρ καθαρὸς ἔσται ἀπὸ ῥύπου; ἀλλ' οὐδείς, ἐὰν κὴ μία ἡμέρα ὁ βίος αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς: Or elſe a general Concluſion from the Conſideration of this and other Paſſages to the ſame effect; ſee particularly xv. 14, 16. xxv. 4, &c. ἔτι δὲ κὴ περὶ Ἰωὸ οὕτω γέγραπται, Ἰωὸ ἦν δίκαιος, κὴ ἄμεμπτος, ἀληθεινὸς, θεοσεβὴς, ἀπεχόμενος ἀπὸ πάντος κακοῦ· ἀλλ' αὐτὸς ἑαυτῶ καθηγορῶν ἔφη, οὐδεὶς καθαρὸς ἀπὸ ῥύπου, ἐὰν κὴ μιᾶς ἡμέρας ἡ ζωὴ αὐτοῦ. *Clem.* Rom. Epiſt. ad *Corinth.* ch. xvii.

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ture, be in a continual Succeſſion convey'd to all his Poſterity?

But allowing this Corruption to be communicable, how can it with reſpect to us have the true and formal Nature of Sin, ſeeing that it is altogether involuntary? Involuntary indeed it is in ſome Reſpects, as it doth not directly proceed from the free Motion of the Will; but as it is itſelf the natural Biaſs and Inclination of the Will to Evil, we cannot ſay that it is altogether involuntary, or that that fatal Principle which is the Occaſion that in us *dwelleth no good Thing*, hath not the true and formal Nature of Sin.

It may be then urged, Why did God create us on ſuch Terms? The very Suppoſition that he did *create* us anſwers the Queſtion: *Shall the Thing formed ſay to him who formed it, Why haſt thou made me thus?*[w]—But in ſhort, all theſe and a Thouſand more Objections ten thouſand times more ſpecious, can only reduce the Doctrine of *Original Sin* into the Claſs of the *Chriſtian Arcana*: For if Words have any Force or Meaning; if the ſacred Writings be of any Authority, then is it nevertheleſs ſtrictly true, however incomprehenſible to us; for thoſe Writings do evidently aſſert it with as much Strength and Plainneſs as Words are capable of expreſſing. Foraſmuch then as we are all Sinners from the very Moment of our Birth; and foraſmuch as Sin implies an Obnoxiouſneſs to Puniſhment, it appears that we are born Objects of God's Wrath, Debtors to his Juſtice, and liable to receive thoſe bitter Wages which have by him been declared to be the Reward of Sin.

But

[w] Rom. ix. 20.

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But it hath pleaſed that great Being, *whoſe Property it is always to have Mercy, and to whom only it appertaineth to forgive Sins; it hath pleaſed him verily*, and his *Debtors* we are, to releaſe us from this fatal Obligation; which Releaſe is the Object of the Article before us: Proceed we then to conſider how and by what Methods this Releaſe was effected.

It doth not appear but that God might have exacted the whole Penalty very conſiſtently with his Mercy: But it is not ſo evident that he could have granted ſuch Remiſſion, or Releaſe, conſiſtently with his Juſtice, without ſome proportionable Satisfaction: No ſuch could be made by *Man*; for as he owed to God an univerſal Obedience, no After-acts of Duty could atone for his Tranſgreſſion, becauſe to all thoſe Acts he was obliged, though he had never tranſgreſs'd; and if he had done *every Thing which was enjoin'd him*, he had even then been but *an unprofitable Servant.*[x] The Nature of his Offence, and the Character of the Perſon whom he had offended, would not admit of a trifling Satisfaction; and to have made ſuch as bore any Proportion to his Offence, (which could be no other than what was firſt denounced againſt it) had not been a Remiſſion, but a Diſcharge of his Debt.

[x] Luke xvii. 10.—From hence ariſes a ſolid and concluſive Proof of the ſuperior Nature of *Chriſt*: For had he been no more than Man, then he himſelf had been included in the Curſe; and conſequently, ſo far from being qualified to *make Atonement for the Sins of a whole World*, muſt have wanted a Mediator for himſelf; whereas his Sacrifice being declared to be ſatisfactory for that Purpoſe, and a ſufficient Expiation of the general Guilt, it is evident that he was a Being of a Nature not only different from, but alſo greatly ſuperior to that of Man, for whom this Satisfaction was to be made.

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There remains yet one, and but one Way of being clear'd of this Obligation, which is, if any one can be found who is willing to diſcharge it for us, and who can offer ſuch a Ranſom as God will accept of for the Purpoſe. Such a Mediator did Man actually find in the Perſon of *Jeſus Chriſt*, who is every where ſet forth by the Scriptures as a *Propitiation for our Sins*, with which God is content. We have in a former Article beheld this ſacred Perſonage cloſing a Life of Miſery with a Death full of Pain and Ignominy, and here we perceive the Source, the Cauſe, and End of all thoſe Sufferings. *He was cut off* thus *not for himſelf*,[y] but to ſatisfy his offended Father, and to procure ſuch a Reconcilement for us as might be at once compatible with infinite Mercy and as boundleſs Juſtice.

That this was the principal Part of the bleſſed *Jeſus*'s Commiſſion, or rather indeed his ſole Errand, is abundantly evident from the ſacred Writings, as well prophetic as hiſtorical: The moſt compleat Piece of any in the former to this Purpoſe, is the 53d Chapter of *Iſaiah*, which contains a moſt lively Diſplay of his Sufferings, at the ſame Time not placing them to his own Account, but teaching us, that *he was wounded for our Tranſgreſſion, bruiſed for our Iniquity, ſtricken for the Tranſgreſſion of the People, and loaded with the Chaſtiſement of our Peace.* Upon his firſt Appearance in a publick Character, the *Baptiſt*, his proper Herald, exclaims with a prophetic Rapture, *Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the Sins of the World.*[z] His own Account of himſelf and his Miſſion is, that he came *to give his Life as a Ranſom*

[y] Dan. ix. 26. [z] John i. 29.

Ranſom for many;[a] *that he would lay down his Life for his Sheep*;[b] and *give his Fleſh for the Life of the World*,[c] &c. At the Inſtitution of the moſt ſolemn of his Sacraments, he tells his Diſciples, that the Bread he is then breaking is (emblematically) his *Body*, which muſt ſhortly be broken, or *given* for them; and the Wine, in the ſame Senſe, his *Blood*, which is on the Point of being *ſhed* for them and for the World, for THE REMISSION OF SINS.[d] ART. X.

With equal Care and Induſtry was this ſalutary Doctrine perpetuated by his Apoſtles and Followers, all of them delivering it as a fundamental Point to their Proſelytes, that *Chriſt* had *offered one Sacrifice for Sins*;[e]—that he had *once ſuffered for Sins*, not his own, but *the juſt* Redeemer *for the unjuſt* World;[f]—that *he was delivered for our Offences*;[g]—that *he gave himſelf for our Sins*;[h]—and that *he died for our Sins, according to the* prophetic *Scriptures*.[i]

It is evident then, that this Sacrifice of *Chriſt* was intended as an *Atonement for the Sins of* THE MANY, and an Expiation of the general Guilt; and not only ſo, but that it was really received and conſidered as ſuch: For ſince *he himſelf bare our Sins in his own Body on the Tree*,[k] on which he expired, as a Malefactor; ſince God *laid upon him* at that Inſtant *the Iniquity of us all*, and he then underwent, with that upon his Head, the Stroke which was always conſidered as expiatory, *i. e.* a painful and ignominious Death; all the Iniquity for which he then ſuffered was thenceforth done away

[a] Matth. xx. 28. [b] John x. 15, 18. [c] Ibid. vi. 51. [d] *See* Matth. xxvi. 1 Cor. xi. *&c.* [e] Heb. x. 12. [f] 1 Pet. iii. 18. [g] Rom. iv. 25. [h] Gal. i. 4. [i] 1 Cor. xv. 3. [k] Iſaiah, liii. paſſim.

ART. X. for ever, by thoſe *Stripes* we were confeſſedly *healed*; and hereon is founded that Covenant which with a godlike Mercy hath given Aſſurance to Mankind, that *their Sins and their Iniquities ſhall be remembred no more.*[l]

Numberleſs are the Teſtimonies which might be drawn from the ſacred Volume in this Behalf, particularly from that Part of it which contains that gracious Covenant which was ſealed with this ſacred Blood, there being ſcarce a Page of it but what informs us, that *in Chriſt we* actually *have Redemption*;[m]—that *we are now juſtified freely through the Redemption which is in Chriſt Jeſus*;[n] that *we are reconciled unto God, by the Death of his Son*;[o]—who hath alſo *taken away the Hand-writing which was againſt us, blotting it out*,[p] *i. e.* cancelling the Bond wherein we ſtood engaged as Debtors to God, and of Conſequence hath fully releaſed us from that fatal Engagement.

That the Sacrifice of *Chriſt* was neceſſarily full and ſatisfactory, might indeed be fairly argued from the Dignity of his own Character. Our Puniſhment had doubtleſs been altogether intolerable, had we been ourſelves abandon'd to the juſt Chaſtiſement of our Offences; but conſidering the vaſt Diſproportion between a miſerable Sinner, and one who *knew no Sin*, one who was *holy, harmleſs, undefiled, and ſeparate from Sinners*;[q] conſidering the immenſe Diſparity between an incarnate Deity, and an apoſtate fallen *Creature*; conſidering the extream Bitterneſs of his Sufferings, thoſe Sufferings may be well look'd upon as a ſufficient Atonement for all the Guilt ſo circumſcribed a Creature as

[l] Heb. viii. 12. [m] Eph. i. 7. Coloſ. i. 14. [n] Rom. iii. 24. [o] Ibid. v. 10. [p] Coloſ. ii. 14. [q] Heb. vii. 26.

as Man could poſſibly incur: And laſtly, as a convincing Proof that it would be conſider'd as ſuch, it was ordained by God himſelf to be the Means of our Redemption; he through his great Love to Mankind having *ſent* this *his Son into the World* for this, and this only Purpoſe, that we *ſhould not periſh*, as we had deſerved, but be again received into Favour, and reſtored to the Expectation of *everlaſting Life*.' ART. X.

Thus by the Blood of *Chriſt*, which he ſhed upon the Croſs, were we cleanſed from that Pollution, which infected our Natures, and flow'd to us by Inheritance from our firſt Progenitor: And whereas we had otherwiſe been perpetually obnoxious to the Wrath of God on that Score only, and juſtly liable to the Puniſhment which was due to that Guilt, we are now reſtored, ſo far at leaſt, that upon certain Terms (and thoſe no very ſevere ones) the Puniſhment ſhall not only be remitted, but even the Guilt itſelf ſhall never once riſe in Judgment againſt us, or be placed to our Account; for this alſo muſt neceſſarily be included in the Remiſſion, as well as the Releaſe from Puniſhment; for ſo long as the Guilt remains, there muſt ſubſiſt alſo an Obnoxiouſneſs or Liableneſs to Puniſhment. Here then let us again review that Scene of Miſery and Ignominy, of which we have ſeen ſo large a Diſplay under a former *Article*.'—Here let us one Moment contemplate the unbounded Extent of that Love which could undergo ſo much in ſuch a Cauſe.—Oh! the Depth of the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God! How extenſive are his Mercies, and his Love paſſing all Comprehenſion! Not the leaſt Portion of that bitter

' John iii. 16. ' ART. IV.

ART. X. Draught is due to the bleſſed *Jeſus* on his own Account; nor are we to conſider that ignominious Period of a miſerable Life as a caſual or accidental Thing; nor as the Reſult of his own Behaviour on Earth, as tho' he fell like a common Traitor or Malefactor; nor even as merely the Effect of the Malice of his Enemies, the Policy of the *Jewiſh* Rulers, or the Complaiſance of *Pilate*, but of *the determinate Counſel and Foreknowledge of God*,[t] as the neceſſary Pledge of our Salvation, and as a Thing that muſt of Neceſſity have happened.[u] But to return:

The Releaſe from this natural and conſtitutional Guilt, is what I take to be *principally* intended by *the Remiſſion of Sins* in this Article;[w] and thus far this Remiſſion of Sins extends to the whole Race of Mankind: ſo that even thoſe who *having not the Law have yet been a Law unto themſelves, and ſhewn the Work of the Law written in their Hearts*,[x] ſhall have nothing to anſwer for in this Reſpect, but may be even capable of Juſtification, by the great and unbounded Mercies of God.

[t] Act. ii. 23. iii. 18. [u] Ibid. xvii. 3.

[w] *Behold the Days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will make a new Covenant—In thoſe Days they ſhall ſay no more the Fathers have eaten a ſour Grape, and the Children's Teeth are ſet on edge; but every one ſhall die for his own Iniquity*, &c. (Jer. xxxi. *See alſo* Ezek. xviii.) perhaps I may be miſtaken in fancying an Analogy betwixt theſe Texts, and the Chriſtian Doctrine of *Remiſſion of Sins*. Yet, I think, as *thoſe Days* are evidently the Days of the *Meſſiah*, and the *new Covenant* that which was to be ſealed with his blood, 'tis not an unwarrantable Conſtruction of the Prophet's Words, that the Releaſe from this communicative Kind of Guilt ſhould be one main Privilege of that new Covenant, and the principal End of the grand expiatory Sacrifice of the *Meſſiah*.

[x] Rom. ii. 14, 15.

God. For it is the poſitive and univerſal Aſſertion of the Holy Scriptures, that this propitiatory Sacrifice of *Chriſt* was made *for the whole World—not for us only, but for all Mankind*:[y] It was founded on that Guilt in which all Mankind was involved. *Chriſt* as a Redeemer was promiſed immediately upon the Commencement of the general Stain, and was virtually the Lamb ſlain that Inſtant; and for this Reaſon is he repreſented as the great Antitype of *Adam*, and his Righteouſneſs oppoſed to *Adam*'s Unrighteouſneſs; the latter *Adam* introducing Life in a Senſe and Capacity as extenſive as the Death which had been occaſioned by the former. ART. X.

This however is by no means all that is intended by this Article, for under the Term *Sin* is comprehended that Kind of Guilt alſo, which is diſtinguiſhed from the former by the Name of *actual* Sin, that *Grape* which every Man eateth of himſelf; in a Word, thoſe Tranſgreſſions of the Law, which a Man is guilty of knowingly and willingly: And even of theſe are we taught to believe that Remiſſion may be had, at leaſt however in that Church which was founded in the Doctrine of Repentance and *Remiſſion of Sins*. Let us now therefore conſider how and in what Senſe this Remiſſion of Sins becomes properly an Object of our Belief.

In the firſt Place then, before the Promulgation of the Goſpel, there could be no Aſſurance of a Re-acceptance with God, after ſuch a ſhameful Lapſe from our Obedience: Natural Religion could ſuggeſt nothing but Puniſhment, as the Conſequence of Tranſgreſſion; and even the Terms

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[y] *See* 1 John, ii. 2. Rom. v. 18. and ſeveral Texts already refer'd to, *&c.*

ART. X. Terms of the Law were only "This do, and thou "ſhalt live."[a] And notwithſtanding that ſome Crimes of a lighter Nature were allow'd to be expiated by Sacrifice (which Sacrifices by the way had no other Merit, ſave what they derived from the great Paſſover *Jeſus Chriſt*) yet to very many were annex'd the irreverſible Sentence "Thou "ſhalt ſurely die, thy Blood ſhall be upon thee."[b] But under the Goſpel Diſpenſation a general Indemnity is held out to all, upon certain Terms; and it is an high Privilege of the Church of *Chriſt*, that in it may be had *Remiſſion of Sins*. But ſecondly,

It is further render'd ſo by the Conſideration of the Means by which it is procured; which we are to believe to be, not any Merit or Righteouſneſs of our own, but purely and entirely by the Blood of *Chriſt Jeſus*, which was ſhed for that Purpoſe: We are to believe that this Remiſſion, which was never preach'd till it was preach'd in his Name, is not to be obtain'd by any other Means but through his Name, and that *there is not any other Name under Heaven given unto Men whereby we may be ſaved*,[b] except the Name of the Lord *Jeſus*; but that by this however after certain Requiſites perform'd on our Part, it is certainly and infallibly attainable. Theſe Requiſites are firſt *in general* Baptiſm, or Initiation into that Church in which Remiſſion is preached, which is of itſelf every Way ſufficient to waſh away the Guilt of that original Pollution which is inherent in our Nature, and therefore will alone entitle Infants to all the Merits of *Chriſt*'s Death and Paſſion; but in Adults, who are capable of contracting, and who daily and hourly do not ceaſe

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[a] See Deut. xxvii. 26. and Galat. iii. 10. [b] See the Books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy. [b] Acts. iv. 12.

ceaſe to contract additional Guilt, there muſt be added, as abſolutely neceſſary and indiſpenſable Qualifications, REPENTANCE whereby *they forſake Sin*, and FAITH, not in the Merits even of that Repentance, but ſolely in the Mercy of God, thro' the Merits of *Jeſus Chriſt*; upon which Terms is preached unto all Men *Forgiveneſs of Sins*. ART. X.

If this Expoſition of the Article before us be juſt, as I truſt it is, it appears that *Salvation out of the Pale of a particular Church*; or *an abſolute Power of Remiſſion in the Head or any other Officer of that Church* (as the *Romaniſts* dream) were Matters not ſo much as thought of. I believe the Remiſſion of Sins, therefore, is not I believe that the Pope, the Prieſt, or any Man breathing, has (upon my unreſerved Confeſſion of my Sins) a full Power to abſolve me both from the Guilt and Puniſhment of them, but—I believe that by Virtue of *Chriſt*'s Blood, which was ſhed upon the Croſs, and God's gracious Acceptance of that Sacrifice, I not only ſtand abſolved from that Guilt which I brought into the World with me, but that by Means of an humble Faith in that Sacrifice, and a ſincere and unfeigned Repentance, I may receive alſo a full Remiſſion of all thoſe *perſonal* Offences, which the Frailty of my imperfect Nature expoſes me to the daily Commiſſion of; and thus, in the Senſe of the Creed, I believe *the Forgiveneſs of Sins*.

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cafe to contract additional Guilt, there muſt be added, as abſolutely neceſſary and indiſpenſable Qualifications, REPENTANCE whereby they forſake Sin, and FAITH, not in the Merits even of that Repentance, but ſolely in the Mercy of God, thro' the Merits of Jeſus Chriſt; upon which Terms is preached unto all Men Forgiveneſs of Sins.

If this Expoſition of the Article before us be juſt, as I truſt it is, it appears that Salvation out of the Pale of a pretended Church; or an abſolute Power of Remiſſion in the Head or any other Officer of that Church (as the Romiſh dream) were Matters not ſo much as thought of. I believe the Remiſſion of Sins, therefore, is not I believe that the Pope, the Pardi, or any Man breathing, has (upon my unfeigned Confeſſion of my Sins) a full Power to abſolve me both from the Guilt and Punishment of them, but—I believe that by Virtue of Chriſt's Blood, which was ſhed upon the Croſs, and God's gracious Acceptance of that Sacrifice, I not only ſtand abſolved from that Guilt which I brought into the World with me, but that by Means of an humble Faith in that Sacrifice, and a ſincere and unfeigned Repentance, I may receive alſo a full Remiſſion of all thoſe perſonal Offences, which the Frailty of my imperfect Nature expoſes me to the daily Commiſſion of; and thus, in the Senſe of the Creed, I believe the Forgiveneſs of Sins.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE XI.

THE
Resurrection of the Body.

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The Reſurrection of the Body.

1 Cor. xv. Ver. 23.

—This Corruptible muſt put on Incorruption, and this Mortal muſt put on Immortality.

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THE Reſurrection of the Body being in a great meaſure a novel Doctrine[a] at the firſt Promulgation of the Goſpel, met with very conſiderable Oppoſition. When *Paul* preached it at *Athens*,[b] many mock'd at him, and even the Philoſophers look'd on him in the contemptible Light of a Babbler, or trifling Fellow. Among the *Jews* themſelves there was a whole Sect of Men, who ſaid there was *no Reſurrection*,[c] and who pretended to reject it upon the Principles of Speculation. But

[a] For whatever Notion the *Jews* had of it (which it is probable amounted at furtheſt to no more than a re-embodying of the Soul, without regard to identity, *&c.* 'tis certain that the Doctrine was entirely new to the *Heathen* World, whoſe *Tartarus* and *Elyſium* were filled only with aerial Spectrums:

Ter conatus ibi collo dare Bracchia circum,
Ter fruſtra comprenſa Manus, effugit Imago,
Par levibus Ventis, *&c.* Vid. *Virg.* Æn. vi.

[b] Act. xvii.

[c] The *Sadducees*. The Founder of this Sect was one *Sador*, about 260 Years before *Chriſt*; who ignorantly or wickedly miſinterpreting the generous Doctrine of his Maſter *Antigonus*, that *Piety ought to be found'd ſolely on the Love of God, and not in the ſervile and mercenary Views of Reward*, from thence taught, that no Reward was to be expected, &c.

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But these Men did *err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the Power of God:*[d] They had neither attended to the clear Discoveries with which they were supply'd from Revelation, nor to those strong and conclusive Arguments in this Behalf, which might have been drawn from Reason and the Nature of Things.

Now this Charge must fall heavier upon the Christian *Sadducee.* If there be yet any one so senseless, as under the Gospel Dispensation to say *There is no Resurrection,* 'tis evident that his Mistake must proceed, not from Want of Attention to, but from actually not knowing *the Scriptures and the Power of God.*

On this Charge I shall ground what I have to say on this Subject, and endeavour to prove that he, who knows and duly considers these Things, cannot say, *There is no Resurrection.* What is to be understood by the Term *Resurrection,* has been already sufficiently explained under a former Article,[e] and therefore needs not to be here repeated.

Whoever rejects the Doctrine of a Resurrection must do it for one of these Reasons, *viz.* Either that he looks upon it as impossible, or as improbable and unnecessary, or lastly as not sufficiently revealed and warranted by Scripture.

First then, if a Resurrection be impossible, it must be so either with respect to the Agent, or to the Subject or Patient, *i. e.* either that the constituent Parts of the Body are by Death so effectually disunited, that they are incapable of a Rejunction; or else at least that it is a Work of so much Difficulty, that there is not any Being of Power and Activity sufficient to effect it. But with

[d] Mat. xxii. 29. [e] ART. V.

with reſpect to the Subject, 'tis certain that Man at his Death returns at worſt but to the ſame Principles from which he was firſt raiſed by Creation; and if Duſt were then capable of an Union with the *Breath of Life*, why not again? and why not indeed at all Times, and on all Occaſions, how often ſoever they ſhould be ſeparated? If that which confeſſedly did once not exiſt, hath actually riſen into Being, how much rather muſt we conclude that which hath a viſible Exiſtence to be capable of a Reſtoration, tho' for a while that Exiſtence ſeem to be loſt.[f] ART. XI.

If it be aſked, where will the Duſt be found? Undoubtedly ſomewhere within the Circuit of created Nature; for to ſuppoſe it to be entirely loſt, were to ſuppoſe an abſolute Annihilation of ſomething which was once actually in being: but we may full as reaſonably admit of a Reſurrection with all its Difficulties. Annihilation is a *Nodus Deo Vindice dignus*, a Taſk which requires the Interpoſition of Omnipotence equally with any Part of that Work; for *Matter*, tho' it have a perpetual Tendency to Alteration, and is continually paſſing from one Stage or Shape to another, hath yet no Kind of Propenſity to give up its Exiſtence. A Particle may traverſe all the four Elements, but will be found in ſome of them; expell it from the *Earth*, the *Air* is ready to give it Shelter; hence may you trace it through *Water*, or even *Fire* itſelf,

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[f] Τὸ οὐκ ὂν ἐγένετο, τὸ δὲ ὂν ἂ πολὺ μᾶλλον γενῆσθαι; This is ſaid to have been the favourite Argument of one *Gabias Ben Peſica*, a *Jew*, who was cotemporary with *Simeon the Juſt*, about 300 Years before *Chriſt*. By the way, I ſhould be glad to learn, how ſuch a Thought could enter *Gabias*'s Head, if the Doctrine of a Future State were ſo abſolute a Stranger to the *Jewiſh* Theology as ſome would perſuade us it was.

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What hinders then the very ſame Particles, which ſhall be diſunited by Death, from being again united in the very ſame Manner as before, except that it be a Work of ſo much Difficulty, that there cannot be found a Being capable of effecting it?

Were we to proceed indeed upon the *Epicurean* Hypotheſis, and ſuppoſe that theſe Particles, after a wanton mazy Dance of a Myriad or two of Centuries, were to jump again all at once into their old Form, we ſhould juſtly expoſe ourſeves to the Ridicule of every intelligent Being—(and yet I think a Reſtitution even upon ſuch Principles were full as rational as a firſt Formation upon them)—Or were we to pretend to a ſpontaneous Reſurrection, either from any inherent Virtue in the Particles themſelves, or by the Force and Activity of our own Souls, we ſhould deſerve little better Credit. But there is an Agent who is equal to every Part of this difficult Taſk.

For how were theſe Particles firſt united? By whom were they firſt collected, and diſpoſed in their preſent Form and Order? By whatever Means this was once effected, ſurely by the ſame may it be effected again: But if this Means was God, if he were the firſt Author of our Compoſition (as from the Obſervations on a former Article it appears he was) then is God every way qualified to renew the Work, and to reſtore the ſcatter'd Particles of our Subſtance to that Form, which himſelf only firſt impreſs'd upon them. For aſk the

the Artificer, whether is eaſier for him, firſt to compoſe a regular and ingenious Machine, or afterwards to refit and replace the ſeveral Members of it, whenever, either by Deſign or Accident, they ſhall happen to be diſunited. In ſuch a Caſe, who of a moderate Expertneſs is at a loſs how to proceed, whence to recollect his ſeveral Materials, or what Order to purſue in the Rejunction of them? But if you give this Artificer *Omniſcience* and *Omnipotence*, what will be then an Over-match for his Skill, or what Part of his Work ſhall have Difficulty enough but for a Moment to impede his Progreſs? ART. XI.

This expert and able Artificer is God, who as it were takes us in Pieces, diſpoſes of our ſeveral Members in his Repoſitory, where he can immediately turn to each of them, when Occaſion ſhall require: For whatever ſeems loſt to us, is by no Means ſo to him; nor is it the Spirit only which returns to him, but even the earthly Tabernacle itſelf, each having its proper Receptacle, the former in the Boſom of *Abraham*, the latter in various Situations; a while perhaps in humid, a while in igneous bodies; now in a Bird, now in a Beaſt or Fiſh;[g] yet ſtill within the Eye of God, who uſes theſe but as his Veſſels or Reſervoirs for that Purpoſe, and to whom they ſhall be obliged to render back the *Depoſitum* on Demand.[h]

[g] Not only the Soul is laid up; but even the Fleſh hath its Repoſitory in Water, in Fire, in Birds, in Beaſts, &c. *Tertull.* (On the Reſurrection of the Fleſh) *ch.* 68.

[h] *And I will command the Fiſhes, and they ſhall vomit up the Bones which they have devour'd, and I will refit Joint to Joint, and Bone to Bone.* This is cited by *Tertullian* as Scripture; but whence he had it, is uncertain; at leaſt it is no where in our Canon: His Comment upon it is this—"The Beaſts and "Fiſhes are expreſsly mentioned in the Reſtitution of the Fleſh "and

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With reſpect then to the Recovery of the Materials, there will be nothing wanting to our Reſtoration: For why ſhould our *Subſtance* be then *hid from* him, any more than it was when we were *made in ſecret, and curiouſly wrought in the lower Parts of the Earth: His Eyes ſaw it while it was yet imperfect, and in his Book were all our Members written, which in Continuance were faſhioned, when as yet there were none of them.*[l] Why ſhould they be at any Time leſs viſible, or how indeed can they be any where conceal'd from that Eye, before which *Hell is open, and Deſtruction hath no Covering?*[k] With regard to the Reſtitution of theſe Materials to their firſt Form, will he who is *Almighty* ever have loſt that Power, by which that Form was firſt impreſs'd upon them? *Utique idoneus eſt, reficere qui fecit*, He who form'd can ſure re-form;[l] a Word brought them firſt together, a Breath diſſolves them:[m] What is there wanting to bring them together again, that is not in the Power of him whoſe very Breath is pregnant with Creation or Annihilation?

Why then *ſhould it be thought a Thing incredible with any one that God ſhould raiſe the Dead?*[n] Mankind hath been already (more than once) indulged with evident Demonſtration of the *Poſſibility* of the Thing: Several Inſtances are recorded in the Holy Scriptures, where this difficult Task hath been actually effected in the Face of the World; in one of which we are told that the Diſſolution had ſo far taken place, that the Body was ſuppoſed to

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" and Blood, in order to expreſs the more ſtrongly the Re-
" ſurrection of thoſe Bodies which have been devour'd, ſince
" Reſtitution is demanded of thoſe Animals which devour'd
" them." *Tertull.* Ibid. *ch.* 63.

[l] Pſ. cxxxix. 15, 16. [k] Job, xxvi. 6. [l] *Tertull.* on the Reſurrection, *ch.* 11. [m] See Pſ. civ. [n] Acts xxvi. 8.

to ſtink.[o] Nay, very numerous indeed have been the Proofs; for, at our *Saviour*'s Reſurrection, the Bodies of ſeveral holy Men, ſome of whom had been dead perhaps for the Space of ſeveral Centuries, *aroſe out of their Graves*, and went and made a publick Appearance in the holy City.[p] ART. XI.

But the moſt pregnant Evidence of the Poſſibility of ſuch a Reſurrection as is the Subject of this Article, is that of our bleſſed *Firſt Fruits*, the Lord Jeſus. In the other Caſes, the Return was made but to a ſhort and temporal Life; but *Chriſt being once raiſed from the Dead, dieth no more; Death hath no more Dominion over him.*[q] *Now if Chriſt be preached*, nay (as I truſt he is) be proved, *that he roſe from the Dead*, who ſhall ſay *There is no Reſurrection of the Dead? For if there be no Reſurrection of the Dead*, on Account of the Impoſſibility or Difficulty of it, *then is Chriſt not raiſed*; there being no more Impoſſibility that one *mortal* Body ſhould *put on Immortality*, than that another ſhould: And, to cut ſhort the Argument, *If Chriſt be not riſen*, farewell the whole Scheme of Chriſtianity; *then is our Preaching vain, and your Faith alſo is vain.*[r]

II. As a Reſurrection is not impoſſible, ſo neither is it by any means either improbable or unneceſſary, but rather, in both Reſpects, highly the contrary.

For if we conſider firſt the Intent and End of the Body's Creation, which was to be a Companion for the Soul, we can hardly believe it was deſign'd to be made ſo very little Uſe of, as we often find it is; or that it ſhould attend the Soul through

[o] *Lazarus.* See John, xi. For the reſt, ſee 1 Kings, xvii. 2 Kings, iv. and xiii. Mark, v. Luke, vii. Acts, xx.
[p] Matt. xxvii. 52. [q] Rom. vi. 9. [r] See 1 Cor. xv. 12, &c.

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ſo ſhort a Stage only as Human Life, leaving her to make the Remainder of an infinite Progreſs by herſelf.

Then if we conſider how large a Share the Body bears in thoſe Tranſactions, by which the future happy or miſerable Being of Man is to be determined; as on the one hand it were not reaſonable, that the Body ſhould be excluded from all Share in the Reward due to a virtuous and well-ſpent Life, ſo on the other it is not to be imagined, that the Soul ſhall be left to ſuſtain alone the fatal Conſequents of thoſe Follies, in which ſhe had often (if not always) by much the leaſt Concern.[s]

Numerous, and pregnant are the Conſiderations which might be added to theſe, in Proof of the Neceſſity, and conſequently the ſtrong Probability of a corporeal Reſurrection: but as I either already have been or ſhall hereafter be obliged to introduce them on another Occaſion,[t] I ſhall content myſelf with obſerving only, that ſuch a Thing is not leſs clearly argued by the Nature and Ends of our Redemption, than by thoſe of our Creation.

For if the Dead riſe not—then is the Chriſtian *of all Men moſt miſerable*,[u] and conſequently the Ends of his Redemption, which were Glory and Happineſs, are abſolutely and entirely fruſtrate. So has Providence wrought the nobleſt and moſt incomprehenſible

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[s] Or rather thus—As it will be abſolutely requiſite for the Soul to have ſome Cloathing in a future State, whether of Happineſs or Miſery, an unembodied Spirit being perhaps incapable of either Pleaſure or Pain [therefore neither are Angels ſuppoſed to be *incorporeal* Beings, tho' of a more ſubtile and volatile Subſtance than Terreſtrials] it is more probable that it ſhould reſume its preſent Cloathing, properly modified, than that Recourſe ſhould be had to a new Creation, to ſupply the Deficiency.

[t] See ART. VII. and XII. [u] 1 Cor. xv. 16—19.

prehenſible Scheme to no Purpoſe; the holy *Lamb* was ſlain in vain, and the Triumph over Death and the Grave was an empty Boaſt, ſince not a tittle of the Power of either of them is deſtroyed or diminiſhed, but all thoſe unhappy Men, *who are fallen aſleep in Chriſt*, with the flattering and deluſive Hopes of a Reſurrection, are betrayed, and *periſhed*; condemned to a perpetual Oblivion and Obſcurity, notwithanding all that hath been done to redeem them from it.—If there be any Weight, or Truth in theſe Conſiderations, we muſt certainly ceaſe to imagine a corporeal Reſurrection either improbable or unneceſſary. Nor will, ART. XI.

III. The Want of ſufficient Revelation furniſh at all a better Plea; for the *Sadducee* erred through *Ignorance of the Scriptures*, as well as from not underſtanding the Power of God;—as I doubt not in a very few Words to make appear.

And becauſe this was actually charged upon the *Sadducee*, at a Time when the whole of Scripture was contain'd in the *Firſt Teſtament*, let us firſt inquire what Evidence he might have been furniſh'd with from thence, ſufficient to have prevented his Miſtake. We muſt not here indeed expect to find ſo full and clear a Diſcovery of the Thing, as hath been ſince indulged us in the Holy Goſpel, for which the compleat Diſplay of *Life and Immortality* was reſerved: There are many Particulars, relating to the Reſurrection, which certainly were, and were intended to be conceal'd from Mankind till the evangelical Diſpenſation ſhould take Place. But yet they had ſo clear Evidence of another Life, and conſequently of a Reſurrection in general, that had they, after a due Attention to it, continued yet incredulous, it might be juſtly ſuppoſed that they would have proved inflexible, even by the Evi-

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dence of a Perſon actually reſtored from the Dead.[w]

For (to give the juſt Preference to that Argument, which our bleſſed Saviour himſelf thought proper to uſe) *that the Dead are raiſed, even* Moſes *ſhewed at the Buſh, when he calleth the Lord the God of* Abraham, *and the God of* Iſaac, *and the God of* Jacob, who, tho' loſt to the World, do yet ſubſiſt to him; *for he is not a God of the Dead, but of the Living, for all live to him.*[x] By which Argument he not only effectually ſilenced the *Sadducees*,

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[w] See Luke xvi. 31. [x] Luke xx. 37. There is infinitely more Weight in this Argument than can be obvious to an inattentive Reader. Tho' Fa. *Maldonat* and Card. *Du Perron* did not ſcruple to ſay, one, that it was at beſt but a probable not a concluſive Argument, and the other, that it had abſolutely no Force at all but what it received from the Authority of the Church. To ſay nothing of the ill Compliment theſe Obſervations pay to the Perſon who uſed it, 'tis certain the Argument appear'd in a very different Light both to the *Phariſees* and *Sadducees*. Either then *Chriſt*'s Antagoniſts muſt have been remarkably weak People, or there muſt be ſome *intrinſic* Weight in an Argument which ſo effectually ſilenced one Part of them, and drew ſuch a particular Applauſe from the other. But by the Light which the Author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* hath thrown upon this Paſſage, 'tis evident to me, that they both underſtood it as though *Chriſt* had ſaid, "God, by calling himſelf the God of *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, expreſſed a particular and extraordinary Regard for them: Their natural Lives, *i.e.* with reſpect to Happineſs and Miſery, were by no means conſiſtent with the Suppoſition of ſuch a ſingular Share in the Divine Favour. Nay more, he gave to each of thoſe Patriarchs the moſt ſolemn and repeated Promiſes of Bleſſings which entirely reſpected themſelves, and which it is evident they died without being put in Poſſeſſion of. For theſe Reaſons both the Goodneſs and Veracity of God, his Faithfulneſs and Truth (which the *Sadducees* dared not to deny) do make it abſolutely requiſite, that *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob* ſhould be reſtored to a Capacity for the Enjoyment of thoſe Honours, which he *who cannot lye* did aſſure them they ſhould not fail of receiving."

ducees, who after that *durſt not aſk him any more Queſtions at all*, but even commanded the Applauſe of thoſe who at other Times were his moſt profeſs'd Enemies. ART. XI.

To this I ſhall at preſent add no more than the following remarkable Paſſage in the Prophet *Daniel*, *Many of them that ſleep in the Duſt of the Earth ſhall awake; ſome to everlaſting Life, and ſome to Shame and everlaſting Contempt.*[y] Theſe however muſt be conſider'd as ſufficient Evidence, that *as touching the Reſurrection of the Dead, the Sadducee* did err from *not knowing the Scriptures.*[z]

But he who proved this upon the *Sadducee* on the Principles of the *Moſaic* Diſpenſation, did not let it reſt there, but in order to prevent the like Miſtake in any of his Diſciples and Followers, hath added ſuch clear and perfect Declarations of the Thing, as to ſet it for the future abſolutely out of the Reach of Cavil and Diſpute: *The Hour is coming* (ſaith he) *in the which all who are in the Graves ſhall hear the Voice of the Son of Man, and ſhall come forth; they who have done Good, to the Reſurrection*

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[y] Dan. xii. 2.

[z] The Reader will perhaps think he miſſes here one Paſſage, which he has uſually met with on this Occaſion, *viz.* that of *Job* xix. 25. I have purpoſely omitted it, becauſe I am far from being ſatisfied that it at all relates to our preſent Subject: There ſeems to lie the ſame Objection againſt it in that Senſe, as againſt the famous *Sybilline* Oracles: It ſpeaks too plain; nor is it by any means probable that *Job*, in that Age and Country (in *Arabia*, about 1500 Years before *Chriſt*) ſhould have ſo full and clear an Idea of a Circumſtance which God but darkly revealed to his own People. In ſhort, I am inclined to ſubſcribe to the ancient Expoſitors, that *Job* had nothing further in View than a Reſtoration to temporal Health and Happineſs; of which, upon the Conſideration of his own Innocence, and the Juſtice of God, he ſcruples not to aſſure himſelf, though his Afflictions were carried to ſo high a Pitch, as that even *Worms deſtroyed his Body*, &c.

ART. XI. *Reſurrection of Life, and they who have done Evil, to the Reſurrection of Damnation.*[a] The future Judgment, of which his Accounts are full and frequent, are conſtantly uſher'd in with the previous Circumſtance of a Reſurrection: The Rewards which he propoſes to his faithful Followers are founded ſolely in this; they are not to be raiſed to Riches or Honours, but to *Life immortal*; and for all their Sufferings, all their Loſſes, all their Proofs of Piety and Self-denial, to receive a Reward or *Recompence*, not in this frail and uncertain Life, but *at the Reſurrection of the Juſt.*[b] To theſe if we ſubjoin the united Teſtimonies of all the Apoſtles and ſacred Writers under the new Diſpenſation, the Thing muſt reſt on ſuch a Foundation, as that it ſhall be impoſſible for a Man to ſay there is no Reſurrection, without appearing groſsly ignorant of the *Scriptures*, as well as unacquainted with the *Power of God.*

I haſten therefore to the more material Buſineſs of this Diſcourſe, *viz.* the Reſolution of that Enquiry (which the Apoſtle ſuppoſes ſome Men may yet propoſe for their further Satisfaction in this Particular) *How are the Dead raiſed? and with what Body do they come?*[c]

For the firſt, *How* are the Dead raiſed? If it be urged with regard to the Means, it may be anſwered briefly thus: In *general* by the Almighty Power of God, to which the Body owes its firſt Exiſtence: In *particular* by that Power, reſident in *Chriſt Jeſus*; by which he was able to effect even his own Reſurrection. For that he is to be the Agent in this Caſe, is not only a rational Conſequent from ſome known Particulars relating to him,

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[a] John v. 28, 29. [b] *See* Luke xiv. 14, &c. [c] 1 Cor. xv. 35.

him, but alſo Matter of immediate and poſitive Revelation. It is not only highly reaſonable that the *Reſtitution* of all Things ſhould belong to him who had alſo the firſt Formation of them, *by whom all Things were made, and without whom not any Thing was made which was made:*[d]—that he to whom *all Judgment is committed,*[e] ſhould ſummon the Delinquents to the Bar of Juſtice; but he himſelf ſcarce ever mentions the Reſurrection but he ſpeaks of himſelf as the immediate Agent in it. More than once doth he promiſe his faithful Followers, that He *will raiſe them up at the laſt Day;*[f] and for this Reaſon he calls himſelf *the Reſurrection and the Life;*[g] the Dead awake, and *come forth* at his enlivening *Voice;*[h] and accordingly it is the conſtant Doctrine of the holy Writers, that *God will raiſe us up by* (*i. e.* by the perſonal Power and Agency of) *Chriſt Jeſus.*[i] But if the Queriſt's *how* reſpect the Manner, he is already anſwer'd by St. *Paul*, in that beautiful Alluſion to a Grain of Seed:[k] This mortal Body is the Seed, and *material* Principle; it firſt ſuffers a Diſſolution and apparent Decay—is reſtored to Life and Vigour by the Almighty Power of God, and riſes in a new and more agreeable Form, greatly enrich'd as well in Dignity as Beauty. Thus at leaſt ſhall it be with the Righteous. *As for the Wicked, it is not ſo with them*; but whatever Transformation they ſhall undergo, ſhall undoubtedly ſet them as much nearer to the Form and Nature of Devils, as the Juſt ſhall approach to the Figure and Likeneſs of Angels.

ART. XI.

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[d] John, i. 3. [e] Ibid. v. 22. [f] Ibid. vi. 39, 40, 44, 54, *&c.* [g] Ibid. xi. 25. [h] Ibid. v. 28.
[i] 2 Cor. iv. 14. [k] *See* 1 Cor. xv.

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I paſs on to the ſecond Part of the Query, *With what Body do* the Dead *come?* which is to be conſider'd in two Lights: Firſt with reſpect to Identity, and ſecondly with reſpect to Form and Quality.

With regard to the firſt, the holy Writings give every where the moſt probable Aſſurance that they ſhall come with the ſame numerical Body, which they enjoy'd in this Life; for which, not to be prolix, I ſhall appeal only to two or three of the moſt pregnant and obvious Paſſages. *The Hour is coming* (ſays our bleſſed Saviour) *in which they who are in the Graves ſhall hear the Voice of the Son of Man, and ſhall come forth:*[l] Which can reſpect only the Body, which was depoſited in the Grave; for the Soul never came there, and conſequently has no Reaſon to be called from thence. Again, the *Apocalyptical* Account of the Reſurrection is, that *the Sea gave up her Dead; and Death and Hell gave up their Dead which were in them*;[m] which cannot be interpreted of their furniſhing a Supply of freſh Matter for the Formation of new Bodies, but only of the Reſtitution of the reſpective conſtituent Parts of the former Bodies, which they had ſeverally abſorbed. Parallel to theſe is the Doctrine of the Prophet *Daniel*, that *the Many* (*i. e.* the Groupe of all thoſe) *who ſleep in the Duſt of the Earth, ſhall awake*,[n] &c. but neither doth the Soul *ſleep in the Duſt*, nor can Particles, which were never yet organized, be properly ſaid to awake; that is, to be *reſtored* to a Vigour and Activity, which they never yet enjoy'd.

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[l] John, v. 28, &c. [m] Apoc. xx. 13. [n] Dan. xii. 2.

In the nobleſt and moſt ample Account of the Reſurrection which was ever given by Man,[o] the whole Proceſs, from the Diſſolution to the Reſtoration, is marked out to us, and the Body, which is *raiſed* in *Incorruption*—in *Power*—in *Glory*—*a ſpiritual Body*, is no other than what was *ſown* in *Corruption*—in *Weakneſs*—in *Diſhonour*—*a natural Body*.[p] We are further inform'd by the ſame Writer—not that the incorruptible and immortal Soul muſt put on an incorruptible and immortal Body,—but that *this* very *corruptible ſhall put on Incorruption, and this mortal ſhall put on Immortality*:[q] From hence ariſes the boaſted Triumph over Death and the Grave[r] (which were elſe far from being well grounded) the Whole of their Prey being thus wreſted from them, and the captive *Body* freed from the Durance in which they held it: Whereas were this ſuffer'd to remain in their Hands, and recourſe had to a new Creation, their *Victory* were then compleat, and *Death* would be not only *the laſt Enemy* which ſhould be left to ſubdue, but remain ſtill unconquer'd. ART. XI.

Theſe Proofs are uſually ſeconded by others drawn from natural Reaſon, ſuch as, firſt, that Account being then to be given concerning Things *done in the Body*,[s] 'tis requiſite that the Body ſhould be preſent to anſwer the Charge; and as it had a Share in the Tranſactions of this Life, it ought to participate alſo of that State of Happineſs or Miſery, which will be the Reſult of them:[t] And

ſecondly,

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[o] 1 Cor. xv. [p] Ibid. 42, 43, 44. [q] Ibid. 53.
[r] Ibid. 54. [s] 2 Cor. v. 10.

[t] As for this Argument, as it ſtands above (though ſcarce ever I think omitted on this Occaſion) I muſt confeſs I can hardly acquieſce in it: For the Body is undoubtedly merely paſſive,

ART. XI. ſecondly, that the Reſurrection of the ſame Body is abſolutely neceſſary, to conſtitute an Identity of Perſon.

paſſive, and muſt move only as it is actuated by the Soul, and therefore can never be really in Fault, any more than the Knife which a Man uſes to cut another's Throat. And as the ſole Uſe of a Body is by its reſpective Organs to convey to the Soul the different Senſations of Pain or Pleaſure; any other Portion of the ſame Matter, or any other Kind of Matter, properly modified, might ſerve the Turn as well.—And yet there is a noble Kind of Juſtice in making uſe of thoſe Inſtruments in the Puniſhment which were employed in the Offence; —which Kind of Procedure has often been obſerved in the viſible Diſpenſations of Providence. I add only, that if the Body had any Share in the Tranſactions of this Life, as a *Co-efficient*, it ought alſo to have a Share in the Reward due to thoſe Actions. If it had not—in ſhort, if it were by Nature ſo abſolutely ſenſeleſs, that it had no Pleaſure in Sin, it will have no Pain in Puniſhment; and therefore may be employed to that Purpoſe, without any Imputation of Injuſtice done to it. By this Means alſo it will have a Kind of Revenge on the Soul for her former Abuſes of it, in compelling it to become the Inſtrument for the Execution of her wicked Purpoſes;—by becoming now the Inſtrument, in the Hand of God, to afflict her for thoſe very Offences. Nor do I hold there to be much more Weight in the ſecond: For *Mens cujuſque is eſt quiſque*. The *Exuviæ* of a Man are by no Means neceſſary to conſtitute Identity. For is the Man, who appears To-day in one Habit, and To-morrow in another, entirely different from the former, both in Form and Quality, and all other Reſpects, ever-the-leſs the ſame Man? Or would the Legiſlature ſcruple to hang a Man in a black Coat, who had committed a Robbery or a Murder in a white one? What Cloaths are to the Body, that the Body is to the Soul;—changeable at Pleaſure *(ſalva tamen Identitate)* without deſtroying the Identity of Perſon. It is further added to theſe Arguments, that the *Vis Vocis*, the very Force of the Word *Reſurrection* requires a Reſtitution of the ſame numerical Particles of Matter: But I do not apprehend ἀνάστασις to be ſo very conſined a Term, but that it might be render'd by a mere *re-embodying* (whether with the ſame Stuff as formerly, or not) without any great Violence done to it. In a Word, the whole Affair reſts upon Scripture Proofs; and as they are ſufficiently ſtrong, we need not have recourſe to others, which in my Opinion, if any thing could do it, would rather *invalidate* than ſtrengthen them.

Perſon. But as I do not hold theſe Arguments to be very concluſive, and as the Strength and Perſpicuity of the former Proofs cut off all Occaſion of recurring to them, I forbear to inſiſt on them, holding myſelf ſufficiently authoriſed by the holy Scriptures to anſwer to the Queſtion *With what Body do the Dead come?*—With reſpect to Identity, the ſame they formerly enjoy'd.[u]

ART. XI.

I proceed

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[u] There is yet one more Argument for the Identity of the Body, which is, that this muſt certainly be the Caſe with reſpect to thoſe Bodies which ſhall have no Occaſion for a Reſurrection, as *Enoch*, *Elijah*, and thoſe who ſhall be found alive at the Day of Judgment. This Obſervation may alſo ſerve for an Anſwer to thoſe who raiſe an Objection to this Point, by doubting, Whether it be poſſible for this *Fleſh* and *Blood* to *inherit the Kingdom of God*—for *Corruption* to *inherit Incorruption*—In a Word, whether theſe *very* Bodies be capable of Glorification. In their preſent State, undoubtedly they are not;—which muſt be the Apoſtle's Meaning in that Aſſertion (1 *Cor.* xv. 50.) For if we make him ſpeak too literally, we ſhall find him contradicting expreſs Facts, not only in the Caſes abovementioned, but in the Tranſfiguration of our bleſſed Saviour alſo, recorded *Matth.* xvii.

Here uſually ariſes another Query.—Since the Parts of Matter are in a continual Fluctuation, and a Man who lives 40 or 50 Years has ſeven or eight different Bodies, which of them is he to aſſume at the Reſurrection? To this it may be anſwer'd, that (conſidering the real Uſe of a Body, which is only to convey the proper Senſations) 'tis no Matter which. Yet the laſt has ſurely the faireſt Claim: The laſt is it which *ſleeps in the Duſt of the Earth*, which falls a Prey to Death, and is ſwallowed by the Grave, by the Sea, *&c.* and which conſequently they ſhall be called upon to reſtore. Add to this, that our bleſſed Saviour (who is the moſt proper Emblem of a Man thus riſing at the laſt Day) evidently aroſe with that Body which his Soul left hanging on the Croſs; which was depoſited in the Sepulchre of *Joſeph*; which had been perforated by the Nails, and Spear, *&c.* *See* Luke xxiii. 53. xxiv. 3. John xx. 27, *&c.*

I am aware but of one more Scruple on this Head, which is this: Allowing thoſe Parts of the human Body which have paſſed

ART. XI. I proceed to the ſecond Part of the Queſtion; which relates to Form and Quality. With what Body

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paſſed by Tranſmutation into the ſenſitive and animal Creation to be revocable (as there will be then no farther Uſe for theſe) how is it to be with thoſe Men, Part of whoſe Subſtance has been abſorbed by their Fellow-creatures, as in the Caſe of thoſe eaten by *Cannibals* (many of whom are ſuppoſed to have ſubſiſted in the World for many Ages) who is to ſuffer the Loſs, the Eater or the Eaten? And how is the Deficiency to be made good to the ſuffering Party? To this it may be briefly anſwer'd thus: A ſmall Part of the Food (by the neareſt Calculation not above an hundredth) is digeſted into the human Body; ſo that a moderate ſiz'd Man, who is entirely thus eaten by a *Cannibal*, doth not actually loſe above two or three Pounds of his Subſtance: Nor was there ever ſo voracious a Fleſh-eater who did not draw a much greater Part of his Subſtance from Vegetables and other Food, than from human Fleſh: So that the Deficiency in either cannot be great; and whether that Deficiency cannot be made good to which ever it falls upon, without Prejudice to Identity, will not, I think, be a very difficult Matter to determine: For ſuppoſing the Eater (as is moſt equitable) obliged to refund this Part of his borrowed Eſſence, we have here a ready Supply for the Defect in the Perſon ſo devoured. And if it be yet doubted whether it be poſſible to leave the Loſer a ſufficient Body, without having recourſe to Creation, conſider only what I obſerved above (and I think with Reaſon and general Conſent) that the Subſtance of the greateſt *Cannibal* is very far from being derived wholly from human Fleſh; ſo that when he ſhall have given back all his Thefts, he will ſtill have ſomething very conſiderable left, which he may ſafely call his own, —and then let me aſk one Queſtion —The Bread with which *Chriſt* fed the five thouſand in the Wilderneſs,—was it the ſame identical Bread which the *Lad* ſupplied him with (John vi. 9.) or did he diſtribute the five Loaves only as far as they would go, and then have recourſe to a new Creation? If the latter, then it was not the Subſtance of the five Loaves which fed the five thouſand, and conſequently the Evangeliſts have given us a falſe Repreſentation of the Fact: But if (as is the indiſputable Truth) the Identity ſtill remained, notwithſtanding the prodigious Increaſe, who ſhall ſay, 'Tis impoſſible to leave the *Cannibal* a ſufficient Body at the Reſurrection, without having recourſe to a new Creation, and thereby deſtroying the Identity.

Body do the Dead come, with reſpect to Appear- ART. ance? Still the ſame? Shall there be then the vi- XI. ſible Diſtinction of Sex and Age; the ſame mix'd Multitude of Young and Old, Infants and Grey-beards? Why not? *I ſaw the Dead, both* SMALL *and* GREAT, *ſtand before the Throne,*[w] ſaith the Apoſtle. I do not contend that this Form or Figure ſhall be perpetual, or tie the Body down to the ſame Lineaments after its Glorification; yet I am not aware of any Abſurdity in ſuppoſing, that we may, at leaſt in this Form, await the Doom which ſhall change us *in a Moment, in the Twinkling of an Eye*, to Angels or Devils. That ſuch a Tranſmutation ſhall at ſome Time take place, is little leſs than certain; but to ſuppoſe that it will be before the Sentence, is to ſuppoſe the Dead prejudged, and that there is no Neceſſity for the opening of that awful *Book*, in which the Fates of all Mankind are written. In the mean time, how graceful will the Scars of Martyrdom appear upon an holy *Stephen*, a *Paul*, or *Polycarp!* How infamous thoſe Brands which ſhall have been imprinted on us by our own Luſts and Vices![x]

Nor do I conceive ſuch a Suppoſition to be at all incompatible with what the Apoſtle further declares with reſpect to the Qualities of the riſing Body.[y] It is ſtill raiſed in *Incorruption*; it is ſtill raiſed in *Power*; it is ſtill raiſed in (a Capacity for) *Glory*; and no longer a *natural*, but a *ſpiritual* Body. In a Word (whatever I have advanced notwithſtanding) it may yet have left all its groſs and fœtid Particles in the Grave, and be ſtill raiſed in every Reſpect, not only ready to *put on*, but even actually endued with *Incorruption* and

[w] Apoc. xx. 12.

[x] Vide *Auguſtin.* de Civit. Dei, l. xxii. c. 20.

[y] 1 Cor. xv. 42, 43, 44.

ART. XI. *Immortality*, which I preſume are no ways affected by the external Accidents of Form or Figure. Thus far however is certain, that be it as it may, there is nothing in this ſubtile (as ſome think it) and indeed whimſical Interrogatory, which can any way affect or prejudice the Identity of the dying and riſing Bodies. There remain then to be conſider'd only the Qualities of the latter, for which I ſhall have recourſe to that lively and expreſſive Picture of the Reſurrection, to which I have already often had Occaſion to refer, the xvth Chapter of St. *Paul*'s Firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*.

Its Characteriſticks are briefly theſe four: INCORRUPTION, POWER, GLORY, and SPIRITUALITY. *It is ſown in Corruption*—with a natural Tendency to decay. *It is raiſed in Incorruption:* It hath no longer that Tendency—it dieth no more—Death hath no more Dominion over it. It may yet indeed ſuffer a Change, but not a Diſſolution; having left in the Grave that natural Obligation, which ſubjected it to the Law of *Duſt thou art, and to Duſt ſhalt thou return.*[z]

It is ſown in Weakneſs — inert; lumpiſh; wrought upon with Labour and Difficulty—troubleſome to itſelf—ſubject to almoſt innumerable Wants and Infirmities.—*It is raiſed in Power*—lively, vigorous, active; no longer ſenſible of Hunger, Thirſt, Laſſitude, Pain, or any other Infirmity: The ſordid Parts are all ſubſided—even Air itſelf becomes too groſs for it, through which, by a ſpecifick Levity, it ſhoots like a Meteor, to meet its Lord in the Regions of a purer Æther.[a]

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[z] Gen. iii. 19. [a] 1 Theſſ. iv. 17.

It is ſown in Diſhonour—vile Earth (perhaps the moſt ſordid Matter of the whole Creation) oftentimes deformed, and loathſome.—*It is raiſed in Glory*—beautiful, venerable, *brighter than the Stars*;[b] *reſplendent as the Sun*;[c] and *faſhioned like unto* the *glorious Body* of *Chriſt*.[d]—No longer the dark Priſon of the Soul, but tranſmitting even her brighteſt Rays with additional Luſtre. ART. XI.

Laſtly, *It is ſown a natural Body*—ſubject to certain Laws, in order to ſupport in itſelf the animal Life—recreated with animal Pleaſures, and fond of even ſenſual Enjoyments.—*It is raiſed a ſpiritual Body* (not a mere Spirit, which ſo far from having *Fleſh* and *Bones*, as the Diſciples were ſenſible that our Lord had after his Reſurrection,[e] hath neither Form nor Figure; ſtill a Body, but) pure and refined, at once capable of, and panting after ſpiritual and intellectual Enjoyments—deaf to the Allurements of *Senſe*, and as unfit for a *Mahometan* Paradiſe as in its preſent State it is for the *Chriſtian* Heaven.—In a Word, wholly freed from that cruel *Law* in its *Members*, *which is continually warring againſt the Law of the Mind*;[f] and henceforth perfectly adapted to her Service—obedient to her Dictates—influenced only by Reaſon (or ſomething higher than Reaſon) Love, Piety and Truth.—Such Honours are reſerved for this ſordid, this unworthy Maſs of Fleſh; and *bleſſed is he who ſhall have a Part in this Reſurrection*.[g]

For alas! it will not extend to all the Dead; but of the MANY *who ſleep in the Duſt of the Earth*, SOME only *ſhall awake to everlaſting Life*;

[b] Dan. xii. 3. [c] Ibid. *and* Matth. xiii. 43. [d] Phil. iii. 21. [e] Luke xxiv. 39. [f] Rom. vii. 23. [g] Apoc. xx. 6.

ART. XI. the reſt *to Shame, and everlaſting Contempt.* Yet theſe alſo ſhall be *raiſed in Incorruption*—but to their Sorrow; and Immortality ſhall be their Curſe; no longer obnoxious to Death, but condemned to a Life to which even Annihilation itſelf were greatly preferable.—Theſe alſo ſhall indeed be *raiſed in Power*,—but ſuch a Power only as is requiſite to fit them for the Support of eternal Torments.—

Inſtead of ſharing in the *Glory* of the Righteous, even that little Beauty and Luſtre they formerly enjoy'd ſhall fade and periſh: An horrible and ghaſtly Deformity ſhall take place, and the wretched Soul ſhall diffuſe an univerſal Blackneſs throughout the Maſs.—Inſtead of the refined and ſpiritual Bodies of the Juſt, ſhall riſe a groſs and fœtid Lump—fit Fuel for everlaſting Flames—rack'd with unconquerable and inſatiate Paſſions—and in lieu of the calm Complacency and Reſignation of the Righteous, breathing nothing but Curſes and Deſpair.—Such a Transformation ſhall at leaſt ſucceed the final Doom, and this ſhall be the miſerable State of thoſe whoſe Folly hath ſubjected them to the Iron Sceptre of *the ſecond Death.*

I ſhall only obſerve further, that with reſpect both to the Deformity of the Wicked, and the Glory of the Righteous, there is the ſtrongeſt Probability that there will be different Degrees; each reſpective Soul being endued with ſuch a groſſer or purer Body, as may qualify it for receiving the Senſations of a greater or leſs Degree of Happineſs or Miſery, according to its particular Merit. For beſides that it were inconſiſtent with even common Juſtice, that unequal Merits ſhould meet with equal Rewards—we may remember that St. *Paul*, ſpeaking in Alluſion to the Body, deſcribes expreſsly

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ſeveral Stages or Degrees of Glory.—*There is one Glory of the Sun, and another Glory of the Moon, and another Glory of the Stars*; and even *one Star differeth from another Star in Glory. Thus alſo is it*, ſaith he, *in the Reſurrection of the Dead.*[h] Our Saviour himſelf aſſures us, that in his *Father's Houſe are many* (or rather *various*) *Manſions*;[i] nor doth he deny that there will be a *right Hand and a Left* in his *Kingdom*,[k] but only waves the Promiſe of what he ſays belongs properly to the Diſpoſal of the Father.—And thus much will, I hope, be conſider'd as ſufficient for the Reſolution of that Queſtion, *With what Body do the Dead come?* ART. XI.

There remains but one Thing more to be inquired into, which is, how far this Reſurrection ſhall extend.

The *Jews* are charged with denying it to be general;[l] excluding from it the Wicked, and confining it to the Virtuous and Juſt. *The Rain* (ſay they) *deſcends alike on the Juſt, and on the Unjuſt*;

[h] 1 Cor. xv. 41, 42. [i] John xiv. 2. [k] Matth. xx. 23.

[l] Falſely as I think, except in ſome few Inſtances, of very little Authority. For beſides that the direct contrary is charged upon them by St. *Paul* as a general and received Opinion—*And have Hope towards God* (ſaith he) *which they themſelves alſo allow, that there ſhall be a Reſurrection of the Dead, both of the* JUST *and* UNJUST (Acts xxiv. 15.)— Several of their *Rabbi's* expreſsly taught it; and that very Paſſage, on which they are ſaid to ground this Opinion, is a direct Proof of the contrary.—When we read, that of the *Many who ſhall ſleep*, &c. (Dan. xii. 2.) ſome *only ſhall awake to everlaſting Life*, and ſome *to Shame*, &c. we muſt think a Man mad who ſhould urge this as a Proof that NONE ſhould *awake to Shame*. In a Word, whatever has any way ſerv'd to bring this Imputation upon them is rather a Proof that they had a very ſtrong Idea of (what the Author of the *Apocalypſe* calls) *the firſt Reſurrection*, than that they had not a true one of the ſecond.

ART. XI.

Unjuſt; but the Reſurrection belongs to the Juſt alone.[m] But the very End and Deſign of a Reſurrection is demonſtrative of the contrary.—The Juſt riſes to receive his Reward: But there is a Reward which is due to the Unjuſt alſo; and *Death*, as it implies merely a Separation of the Soul and Body, is not the only *Wages of Sin*. For *whoſoever ſhall not be found regiſter'd in the Book of Life ſhall be caſt into the Lake of Fire; which is the ſecond Death:*[n] And this Death it is which is the proper *Wages of Sin*. But were there not one ſingle Argument to be drawn from Reaſon for it, nay were Reaſon even againſt it, (which it is very certain ſhe is very far from being) yet Revelation is too ſtrong in this Point to be with Safety rejected.

When the *Houſholder*[o] returned from his Travels he did not forget the *ſlothful* and *wicked Servant*, but obliged him alſo to ſtand up, and give an Account of the Management of his Truſt, as well as the *good* and *faithful*. At the *gathering* together of *all Nations* the *Goats* are compelled to appear, as well as the *Sheep*;[p] and when the *Voice of the Son of Man* is heard, *out of the Graves ſhall come forth* to the Reſurrection not only *they who have done good*, but *they who have done Evil* alſo;—with this Difference indeed, that the former ſhall come forth to the *Reſurrection of Life*, the latter to the *Reſurrection of Condemnation*.[q]

The Apoſtle teaches, that *we muſt* ALL *appear before the Judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the Things done in his Body, according to that he hath done, whether it be* GOOD *or* BAD.[r]

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[m] Vide *Maimonid.* Explan. c. 10. Tract. Sanhedr.

[n] Apoc. xx. 15. [o] Matth. xxv. Luke xix. [p] Matt. xxv. 32, &c. [q] John, v. 28, 29. [r] 2 Cor. v. 10.

The Lord knoweth (ſaith St. *Peter*) *how to deliver the Godly out of Temptations, and to reſerve the* UNJUST *unto the Day of Judgment to be puniſhed.*[s] And laſtly—*In the Day of Wrath, and Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God, who will render to every Man according to his Deeds,* Regard will be had not only *to thoſe, who by patient Continuance in well-doing ſeek for Glory and Honour, and Immortality,* who ſhall receive *eternal Life*; but to *thoſe* alſo *who* have been *contentious, and have not obeyed the Truth, but have obeyed Unrighteouſneſs,* who ſhall receive *Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguiſh.*[t] ART. XI.

I ſhall content myſelf with theſe Paſſages out of that Variety which might be produced to this Purpoſe, with which even the Stars can ſcarce vie for Multitude: Nor ſhould I indeed have thought it neceſſary to touch at all upon a Point ſo very evident, but that I am unwilling to omit any thing which may at all tend to the Explication of the Article before us.

I am not aware of any thing further of this Kind, except it be with regard to the Time when this Reſurrection ſhall take place; which we are every where told ſhall be at the End of the World, or in the *laſt Day.*[u] But when that Day ſhall be is at preſent a Secret lodg'd only in the Breaſt of the Father.[w] As to what ſhall happen to thoſe Bodies which ſhall be alive at *Chriſt*'s Coming, we are expreſsly informed, that they ſhall undergo the ſame Transformation, or rather Transfiguration with thoſe which ſhall have ſlept in the Graves.

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[s] 2 Pet. ii. 9. [t] Rom. ii. 5, *&c.* [u] *See* John, vi. 39, 40, 44, 54, *&c.*—xi. 24, *&c.* [w] Matth. xxiv. 36.

ART. XI. For though *we ſhall not* ALL *ſleep*, yet *we ſhall* ALL *be changed.*

With reſpect to ſome few other Particulars, as what Place ſhall be the Scene of the Reſurrection, —what ſhall be the Proceſs,—what the Sign,—whether a Trumpet ſhall be really ſounded or not,[y] *&c.* which are Matters of mere Conjecture, as I do not conceive any Neceſſity for our being acquainted with them, were it even poſſible (which it is certain that it is not) ſo I cannot help thinking, that all Inquiries after them ſavour rather of Boldneſs and Folly, than of either Piety or Philoſophy. Here then I ſhall venture to draw to a Concluſion; diſmiſſing the Article, as uſual, with a ſhort Recapitulation of what has been offered upon it: Which we ſee amounts to thus much.—

That as all Men muſt die, ſo ſhall they alſo riſe again from the Dead,—with the ſame numerical Bodies in which they lived in this World; but in many Reſpects changed and alter'd from their former State, having in lieu of *Corruption* put

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[x] With reſpect to the Queſtion, whether thoſe who ſhall be found alive at, or rather juſt before the Day of Judgment, ſhall die ſuddenly, and revive again immediately in order to make the Reſurrection general (as ſome have ſtrongly aſſerted) 'tis a Matter which does not at all concern us to inquire after:—Though the contrary may I think be ſtrongly preſumed from that expreſs Aſſertion, that *We ſhall not all ſleep* (1 Cor. xv. 51.) and the general Doctrine, that *Chriſt* at his Coming ſhall judge both the QUICK and the DEAD. *See* Acts, x. 42. 2 Tim. iv. 1; 1 Pet. iv. 5. 1 Theſſ. iv, 15, *&c.*

[y] It was a received Opinion of the *Jews* (followed herein by ſome *Chriſtians*) that the Scene of the general Reſurrection and Judgment ſhould be the Vale of *Jehoſaphat* (See *Joel* iii. 2.) and *Voſſius* ſuppoſes the Trumpet may be no other than an articulate Voice, probably crying aloud *Ariſe ye Dead, and come to Judgment.* See *Voſſ.* Theſ. Theolog. de Reſurrect. Carn.

put on *Incorruption* and *Immortality*, and acquired ſuch further Degrees of *Glory* or *Deformity*, *Power* or *Spirituality*, as ſhall be agreeable to each Man's reſpective moral Perfections or Imperfections.—That this Reſurrection ſhall be general, and extend to all Mankind, as well the Unjuſt as the Juſt.—That all this ſhall be effected by the Omnipotence of God, and by the particular Power and Agency of *Jeſus Chriſt*—at the End of the World, or in the laſt Day—at the ſolemn Sound of the Trumpet of God.—And thus much is every *Chriſtian* ſuppoſed to give his Aſſent to, when he ſays, in the Words of this Article, I believe *the Reſurrection of the Body.*

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ARTICLE

ART. XI.

put on Incorruption and Immortality, and acquired such further Degrees of Glory or Dignity, Power or Opportunity, as shall be agreeable to each Man's reflective moral Perfections or Imperfections.—That this Reformation shall be general, and extend to all Mankind, as well the Ungodly as the Just.—That all this shall be effected by the Omnipotence of God, and by the particular Power and Agency of Jesus Christ—at the End of the World, or the last Day—at the solemn Sound of the Trumpet of God.—And thus much is every Christian bound to give his Assent to, when he says, in the Words of this Article, I believe the Resurrection of the Body.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE XII.

The Life Everlasting.

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The Life Everlasting.

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The Life Everlasting.

MATT. XXV. 46.

—These shall go away into Everlasting Punishment, but the Righteous into Life Eternal.

ART. XII.

IT is the principal Business of this Chapter to exhibit to us a short but lively View of the Transactions of the Last Day, *when the Son of Man shall come in his Glory, and all the holy Angels with him, and shall cause to be gather'd before him all Nations*; and having divided the whole Assembly into two Classes, ranging the Just on his *right Hand* and the Wicked on his *left*, and having further used such Expostulations with each Class, as shall fully convince them of the strict and impartial Justice of his Awards, shall proceed to pronounce that irrevocable Doom, by which we are inform'd, *These* (on his left Hand) *shall go away into everlasting Punishment, but the Righteous into Life eternal.*

The Whole of this is the Subject of the Article before us; and the everlasting *Death* (for so may it justly be called) of the Wicked [a] is as much the Object of our Belief as the eternal *Life* of the Righteous.

However,

[a] Nam si Anima in Pœnis vivit æternis, &c. — *Mors* illa (potius quam *Vita*) æterna dicenda est. *Aug.* De Civit. Dei, lib. vi. c. 12.

ART. XII. However, before I enter on the more immediate Explication of the Article, I ſhall firſt, by way of Preface, conſider the Words *everlaſting Life* in a general Light, as they may ſignify a Perpetuity of Exiſtence—Immortality (however ſpent); and inquire what Evidence Nature, Reaſon, and Religion can urge, to prove that ſuch a Thing is to be expected.

From each of theſe we have a peremptory and unanimous Suffrage, that the Days of this Life, which are at beſt but *few and evil*, are not the whole Term appointed for our Subſiſtence. Nature tells us we have that about us which is not ſubject to Decay, and whoſe Exiſtence Corruption, to which we ſee all Things elſe expoſed, cannot reach. The Soul, being immaterial, is not ſubject to the Laws of Matter: it has no Principle within itſelf which tends to bring on a Diſſolution, and therefore muſt (without the Interpoſition of a Miracle) enjoy a perpetual Exiſtence. Corruption ariſes from an Alteration of the Site of Parts with reſpect to each other, or of their Form with regard to themſelves; and to ſuch Alteration the Parts of all *Matter* are, by a kind of Law originally impreſs'd upon them, perpetually tending. But that which is immaterial, not conſiſting of Parts, is not ſubject to ſuch Variation, and may therefore continue in the ſame unalterable State for ever.

That the Soul of Man is ſuch a kind of Subſtance, Eſſence, or whatever we may call it, not conſiſting of an Aſſemblage of Parts, *&c.* appears at once from the Operations which are perform'd by it, and from the free and diſengaged Manner in which it ſubſiſts, independent of all *Matter* whatſoever.

If we blend any two *material* Subſtances together in ſuch a Manner, as that the one ſhall be totally diffuſed

diffuſed through the other, it were impoſſible to diminiſh, or ſubtract aught from this *compound* Subſtance, without cauſing that each *Invidual* muſt ſuffer Loſs.—But how great a Proportion may be taken from the Body! It may be reduced to a mere Trunk, and ſunk into a third or fourth Part of its former Bulk and Extenſion, and yet the Soul ſhall be left as entire as ever—and certain it is, that no two Subſtances can be blended together ſo univerſally as theſe, nor can one poſſibly pervade another more throughly and entirely than the animal Being doth the corporeal.—Diminution is effected by a Separation of the Parts from each other—That the Soul in ſuch Caſe ſuffers no Diminution (*i. e.* loſes none of its Parts) is plainly becauſe it has no Parts to loſe, and conſequently is not a material Subſtance; for Matter without Parts were as abſurd as Water without Humidity, or a Sunbeam without Light. And that it doth not ſuffer any Diminution from ſuch Amputations of the Body, is evident in that it is afterwards every Way as fit for the Diſcharge of all Operations, of which it is naturally capable, as it was before ſuch Amputation took place. It miſſes nothing—no Loſs can be ſuffered by a Body without ſome Alteration (proceeding from it) in that Body—but the Soul continues the ſame, and walks as freely through the Univerſe when the Body is abſolutely diſqualified for accompanying her one Step of the Way, as when it was perfect and entire, and enjoyed its full Vigour and Activity.—As little is ſhe *in general* affected by the *natural* Decays of the Body as by the *accidental*: Nay, very often is it ſeen, that her Vigour increaſes as faſt as that of her *material* Companion decays; and that the Soul is ſometimes obſtructed from operating as freely as uſual, in ſome Diſtempers of the Body, is not owing to any Deficiency, natural

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or

ART. XII. or accidental, in herſelf, but to the Unfitneſs of the corporeal Organs;—not that ſhe is leſs capable to act than uſual, but that they are leſs qualified for being acted upon.[b]

In like Manner, when immediate Death follows upon any Inſult being offer'd to the nobler Parts of the Body, it is not becauſe the Soul, as being more particularly reſident in that Part, ſuffers with it, but that the Body being thereby render'd wholly unfit for her further Society, ſhe is obliged immediately to diſengage herſelf from it.

The reſtleſs Activity of the Soul, even when the Body is buried in the moſt ſupine and profound Indolence, is another Proof of her Independency. When the Body ſleeps, it can by no means oblige the Soul to ſleep with it; on the contrary, we often obſerve, that like a Slave freed for a Moment from the watchful Eye of his Inſpector, ſhe then wantons with a more than uſual Gaiety.

It is inconſiſtent with the very Being of *Matter* to be engaged in a continual Round of Employ; alternate and frequent Reſt are abſolutely neceſſary to its Subſiſtence, and upon the with-holding of that beyond a due Space of Time it ſuffers a certain Diſſolution. Let us obſerve then that the Soul ſuſtains no ſuch Damage by even perpetual Action,

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[b] The Caſe of Lunaticks and Mad-men makes this evident to the higheſt Degree of Demonſtration.—The Phyſician who ſhould tell us he applies his Catharticks, Emeticks, Phlebotomy, *&c.* to the *Mind* of a Mad-man, would certainly deſerve to be put under a Courſe of the ſame Operations himſelf: But if by theſe Means the diſtemper'd Parts of the Body, whether Nerves, Solids, Juices, *&c.* can be reſtored to their proper Tone and Vigour, ſo as again to become fit to be employed under the Soul in their reſpective Offices, we preſently ſee the Man return to a ſedate and rational Method of Thinking and Behaviour.

Action, but that on the contrary her Operations grow in general more vigorous, by Perseverance and Repetition, and the Lassitude which follows upon a long and attentive Chain of Contemplation is not that of the Soul, but of those corporeal Organs which she uses as Ducts or Channels for the Conveyance of her Ideas.—In like Manner the Decay or Extinction of the Memory, which sometimes attends the Decay of the Body, is not a Defect of the intellectual Essence, but of those Channels in the Body which were used to act under her in that Operation. ART. XII.

Another Evidence in this Behalf arises from the Soul's Power of operating, not only apart from the Body, when that is absolutely incapacitated for assisting, but even in direct Contrariety to it when it is capable of, and actually in Action. Thus, for Instance, the very Instant that the Body embarks for the *East-Indies* the Soul may set out for the *West*.—But Examples of this are needless.—Who is not every Day made sensible, that his Soul and Body are often engaged in very different Employments, and that it is sometimes with the utmost Difficulty that they can be brought to engage heartily in the same Operation. Yet again—

The Soul is not necessarily affected with the same Sensations as is the Body: Her Eye, for Instance, can enjoy the brightest Glare of Day, while that of the Body is eclipsed with more than *Egyptian* Darkness; can regale itself on the Verdure of a Meadow, while the corporeal Optics are rack'd with the pungent Rays of the most dazzling Colours; she can listen to the most delightful Harmony, in the Moment that the Ear is grated with the most jarring Discords;—nay, can have the most lively Ideas of a cooling Stream, or even

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Ice itself, while the Body is glowing with a Fever, or burning at a Stake.

'Tis plain then that the Soul is not the Body, nor any Part of it; but a distinct and separate Substance. Nor yet is it any Kind of Substance with which the Ideas of *Matter* are compatible; for its Operations are such as *Matter* can by no Means be capable of. If *Matter* can think, reason, *&c.* it must be from some particular Modification of it; but we do not find a thinking *Sphere* or *Cone*, any more than a reasoning *Cube* or *Cylinder*. Nor will Motion at all answer the End; for the swiftest Bullet in the very Heat of its Course is just as wise as a Stone which was never stirred from the Spot of its Formation. —The inexpressible Ease with which the Soul pervades every other Substance, is another Evidence of its own Immateriality. Two *Bodies* cannot possibly occupy the same Parts of Space at one and the same Time, nor can one take the Place of the other without a violent Protrusion of its Parts: But every one must be sensible, that this is hourly effected by the Soul, which can even dart itself into the Heart of the most solid Rock, without so much as varying the *Site* of any one of its Particles, or even of that subtile and volatile Substance which would impede however the Passage of *Matter* through the very Pores of it, unless it were itself first removed.

Lastly, The Soul is not affected with any of those Accidents, which upon all Occasions produce the most discernable Alterations, not to say Convulsions, in every *material* Kind of Substance. It can, for Instance, be at once sensible of the most piercing Heat, the most chilling Cold, nay all the Contrarieties in Nature, without suffering the least Shock, losing any one Particle of its Substance, or abating

abating in the least Degree of its natural and usual Vigour. ART. XII.

Thus is the Soul by its very Nature immortal, and fitted to subsist independent of, and separate from the Body: But if there be not a State or Place for its Reception, when it shall be detached from this corporeal Prison, then hath it this noble and amazing Capacity for nothing: Which were too gross an Impeachment of the Divine Wisdom.

The natural Immortality of the Soul is further legible in its noble and distinguish'd Extraction: All else is *Dust*; but this derives its Essence from an higher and more exalted Principle.—When God had formed the Carcase of our first Parent out of the *Dust of the Earth, he breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life*, and thenceforth *Man became a* living *Soul*.[c]—We may read it in that natural Thirst with which every one pants after Immortality—nothing strikes us with so strong a Dread as the Apprehension of losing our Existence; nor do we (except we be such very Wretches that Annihilation is our only Refuge) derive so full and lively a Satisfaction from any thing (or indeed every thing) beside, as from the pleasing Prospect of living for ever.

I have been obliged to anticipate the greatest Part of those Arguments, which *Reason* might have supplied us with in Proof of the Soul's Immortality; but two there are, which have in them something, as I think so conclusive, that it were almost unpardonable to omit them. And those arise from the *Brevity* and the inevitable *Calamities* of human Life.

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[c] Gen. ii. 7.

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That Man is in many Reſpects the moſt excellent Part of the *viſible* Creation, will, I ſuppoſe, hardly be diſputed: But if there be no State after this, many of his Excellencies muſt be abſolutely and entirely thrown away.—His Days are *few*, even when extended to the utmoſt;—he is more than equal'd in this Reſpect by ſome Beings in the very loweſt Claſſes. The *animal*, nay even the *vegetable* Life often out-meaſures his.—Now whether it be conſiſtent with the Divine Wiſdom, that with all thoſe apparent Excellencies which Man enjoys above the ſenſitive and animal Creation, many Individuals in each Claſs ſhould be ſuffer'd to out-ſtep, or even to rival him in that firſt Privilege of *Being*, let any reaſonable Creature judge. But if to die be (not to *loſe*, but) only to vary the Form or Manner of our Exiſtence, then is it indifferent how ſoon it happens; and that it doth in reality happen ſo indifferently is certainly a ſtrong Proof that Man has ſome other Place beſides this World, where he may anſwer the great Ends of his Creation.—Yet again—

His Days are not only *few*, but *evil*. There is no Happineſs for him in this World, let him behave himſelf never ſo well in it.—Why then that perpetual Thirſt after it? Were we ſent into this World for nothing but to be *tantaliſed*?—It flies us here as faſt as we purſue it; it eludes us in every Shape, and when we imagine we have caught and ſecured it under one Form, it immediately ſtarts up at a Diſtance from us in another. Is Man then never to be happy?—If ſo, he is certainly the moſt miſerable of all Creatures; for none but himſelf is curs'd with that inſatiate Deſire of being ſo; none but himſelf meets with ſuch repeated Diſappointments in the Purſuit of it.—In a Word, no Creature except himſelf, but is capable of being

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satisfied with sublunary and attainable Objects. But this is by no Means consistent with the Notion of his being the Creature, the favourite Creature of an all-benevolent God. If we follow the Dictates of cool and impartial Reason, we must certainly be convinced, that the Disappointments we meet with in this Life are generally intended to engage us to turn our Eyes on another, where we may be assured of better Success.

To the Impossibility of enjoying *true* Happiness in this Life, we may subjoin the apparently unequal Distribution of what we usually call so. We need not look far to be convinced, that a Man's Merits and his Fortunes do not always run parallel. We meet with frequent Instances all round us:—I had almost said too frequent; but when I consider for what End those Lessons are given us, *viz.* that we may trace in them the certain Characters of a future Existence, I retract my rash and groundless Censure. Who can turn his Eyes upon the *noble Army of Martyrs*, and upon those from whose Insolence and Cruelty they derived that Title, and not say that—either the *Judge of all the Earth* is unjust, or there must somewhere be a Place where they shall each of them meet with a Treatment very different from what this World afforded them.

Appeals to Scripture in this Matter were endless, since we might begin the Extract with the first Page, and end it but with the last. For whatever some Men, too fond of Novelty and Particularity, would insinuate with regard to the *Mosaical* Theology in this Respect, I find myself more inclined to listen to him who has told me, that the Arguments of *Moses* are so clear on this Head, that whoever rejecteth his Evidence *would*

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not be perſuaded, though one roſe from the Dead,[a] than to him who would perſuade me, that *Moſes* has not ſaid one Word of the Matter.

And even ſuppoſing this to be true, *viz.* that *Moſes* did not expreſsly deliver the Doctrine of a future State, yet there could apparently be no other Reaſon for his Silence on this Head, than that it was a Thing already too notorious, and too well eſtabliſhed, to need much more to be ſaid upon it. But the *Jewiſh* Church, as far back as we can trace it, maintained an uninterrupted Belief of this Doctrine; and the *Sadducees*, the only formidable Oppugners of it, were but a novel, and indeed an inconſiderable Sect; and even of thoſe, very few (like our modern Atheiſts) were *Sadducees* in that Reſpect, upon the Principles of Speculation. An Opinion ſo univerſally received, as this was for near 2000 Years together,[b] muſt have had a pretty ſolid Foundation; and undoubtedly they either imbibed it from their Legiſlator, or elſe adhered to it as a certain and allow'd Truth, previouſly eſtabliſhed upon other Principles: So that a future State was apparently a Doctrine of Ages long prior to the Goſpel, whether it were *expreſsly* delivered by *Moſes* or not. But I muſt needs think, that whoever peruſes his Writings with due Attention, and conſiders at the ſame Time what Character our Saviour himſelf gives of them in the Parable juſt above alluded to, will not be long in Doubt whether a future State

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[a] *See* Luke xvi. 29.

[b] The *Phariſees*, by much the moſt conſiderable Part of the Nation, acknowledged the Exiſtence of both Angel and Spirit (*Acts* xxiii. 8.) St. *Paul* expreſsly calls the Reſurrection of the Dead one of their allow'd Tenets. (*Acts* xxiv. 15.) And we find one *Gabias Ben Peſica*, a ſtrenuous Champion for it about 300 Years before *Chriſt*.

State made an Article in the *Moſaic* Creed, or not. ART. XII.

As to the Goſpel, the whole Buſineſs of which it was compleatly to bring to Light *Life and Immortality*—to bid you attend to the Evidence offer'd by that in this Behalf, were juſt as wiſe as to expatiate on the Light and Warmth of the Sun, to thoſe who are cheriſhed by its Influence.—Hence the frequent References to *the World to come*—Hence the *Lake where the Worm dieth not*, &c. and the Joys which neither Eye, Ear nor Heart have conceived.—And hence, in a Word, the Article before us, founded on ſuch Authorities as it will preſently fall within the Limits of my preſent Purpoſe to produce.

Here then let us hold, that Man by dying doth not ceaſe to *live*, but only to live after a particular Form and Manner: That his Exit out of this Life is but his Entrance on another; and that he ſhall yet ſubſiſt, even after the dreaded Separation of his Soul and Body.

All Mankind then are to *ſubſiſt* in a State future to this, but not all in the ſame Manner: For of the *Many who* ſhall *ſleep in the Duſt of the Earth*, *ſome* only muſt *awake to* EVERLASTING LIFE; but *ſome to* SHAME *and everlaſting* CONTEMPT.

For as the unequal Diſtribution of Happineſs and Miſery in this Life is one of the ſtrongeſt *rational* Evidences in Proof of another, it muſt be the principal Buſineſs of that Life to ſet Things upon a more equal Eſtabliſhment. Accordingly the *Oppreſſor* muſt not then expect to be upon a level with the *Oppreſſed*, ſeeing that *it is a righteous Thing with God to recompence Tribulation to thoſe who have troubled* others. He who hath enjoyed his *good Things* in this Life, and abuſed them, muſt ſhift the Scene, and give place to him who,

ART. XII. *going through* this *Vale of Misery*, wisely *used it for a Well*, from whence he might hereafter draw perpetual Draughts of the most exalted Felicity.

Were there to be then one Lot to the Righteous and to the Wicked—one common State to *him, who by patient Continuance in well-doing, seeks for Glory, and Honour, and Immortality*, and to him *who is contentious, and obeyeth not the Truth, but obeyeth Unrighteousness* — Where were then the Justice of the great *Arbiter* of human Fates?— But this shall not be the Case: For while one, as the due Reward of his Diligence, shall receive the *Glory, Honour and Peace* which he sought for, the other has nothing to expect but *Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish.*

The first Step which shall be taken by the Director of the last Judgment, when the Dead are all assembled before his Throne, shall be to divide his *Wheat* from the *Tares*; After which they are to be no more blended together, but one to be laid up in his *Garner*, the other to be burned in *unextinguishable Fire.* In a Word, all Communion shall then be broken off between the *Sheep* and the *Goats*; they must part to meet no more; they are bound to two several Points at an infinite Distance from each other; the Wicked turning off one Way into *everlasting Punishment*;—the Righteous the other, into *Life* and Happiness *eternal.* —For by this Term only are their respective States to be bounded; the Happiness of the one and the Miseries of the other receiving a Period *then* only, when Eternity itself shall be exhausted.

As will appear from the following Considerations: First with respect to the *eternal Life* of the *Righteous*;—if they are to be happy for a certain Time only, when is that Time to have an End? And how is the rest of Eternity to be employed? In

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what will that Happineſs be founded? Not in Man's Merits; but ſolely in the Mercies and Goodneſs of God. What Bounds then ſhall we preſcribe to that which is *infinite*, (*i. e.*) incapable of a Boundary? After Myriads of Myriads of Years have revolved, there will ſtill ſubſiſt the ſame Reaſon for the Saint's Continuance in a State of Bliſs, as there were for his being firſt admitted to it; and till thoſe Reaſons can be removed (that is, till God ceaſes to be merciful, or in other Words, till *infinite* becomes *finite*) there muſt he of Neceſſity continue. Or upon Suppoſition that this Happineſs will ceaſe at a certain Period of Time, how (I ſay) is the reſt of Eternity to be ſpent? Shall we naturally fall into nothing at the End of ten or an hundred Thouſand Ages? No ſurely! the Principles by which we ſhall ſubſiſt till then, will even *then* be equally vigorous with what they were at firſt. Muſt we have Recourſe to the Omnipotence of God to effect an Annihilation? Why then did he form us capable of Immortality? Shall we after ſuch a certain Period be reduced once more to a State of Frailty and Temptation?—fall from Angels to Men, and once more be ſet upon the Brink of Miſery and Damnation? Will infinite Goodneſs expoſe us cauſeleſsly to ſuch apparent Hazards? God forbid that we ſhould attempt to ſully the moſt amiable Picture an inſpired Fancy can delineate, with the Shade of ſo groſs and blaſphemous a Conception. ART. XII.

Yet again; the Enjoyments of that cœleſtial State muſt neceſſarily be infinite; for nothing leſs than infinite will ſatisfy our graſping Faculties: They muſt be without Alloy; or they do not come up either to the Character which is every where given of them, or to the Meaſure of our inſatiate Capacities. But the leaſt Dread of loſing them, after

ART. XII. after an Enjoyment of ten thousand, or ten thousand times ten thousand Years, would imbitter all our Sweets, and Heaven would be no longer Heaven: We should but change one State of Imperfection for another; nay, the Exchange must be in some Sense rather for the worse than for the better, as our Regret at the Prospect of losing our *then* Happiness must rise in Proportion to the Happiness itself. A temporary State then cannot be that where *every Tear shall be wiped away from our Eyes*;[f] for the very Thoughts of its being temporary would bring frequent Torrents into them; cannot be that *incorruptible Crown*[g]— that *continuing City*[h]— those *everlasting Habitations*[i]— that *House eternal in the Heavens*[k]—that *Treasure which neither Rust nor Moth can corrupt, nor Thieves break through and steal*[l]—that *eternal Glory*[m]— *eternal Salvation*[n]— *eternal, incorruptible, and undefiled Inheritance*[o]—that *Crown of Life, which the Lord hath promised to all who love him.*[p]—But very few care to object to this Part of the Article: We acquiesce contentedly enough in everlasting Happiness; but do not so easily relish the Thoughts of everlasting Misery; which nevertheless is erected on the same Foundation, and supported by the very same Arguments, the Force of which we are in the former Case ready enough to acknowledge. If infinite Mercy demands the one, eternal Justice as loudly calls for the other. If we apply to the Holy Scriptures for the Evidence of the former, there may we find the latter written in Characters equally plain and legible. If there be in Words Meaning

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f *See* Apoc. xxi. 4. g 1 Cor. ix. 25. h Heb. xiii. 14. i Luke xxvi. 9. k 2 Cor. v. 1. l Matt. vi. 20. m 2 Cor. vi. 17. n Heb. v. 9. o Ibid. ix. 15. p James i. 12.

Meaning and Force sufficient to establish the Doctrine of an eternal Heaven, there wants not any Evidence which they are capable of giving in Proof of as durable a Hell. ART. XII.

How vain are all the Sinner's Hopes of escaping these Miseries by Annihilation, appears partly from what has been already offer'd on this Matter under the foregoing Article. The self-same Business which will raise him from his last mortal Sleep to appear before the Judgment-seat, will find further Employment for him, and supply as good Reasons for his Continuance in his *then* present State of Being, as it ever did for his being once call'd to it.—He is raised to *receive the Things done in his Body*; and the Things done in his Body he must receive.

To suppose the Punishment of that Part of Mankind, who shall then fall under the Sentence of Condemnation, to consist only in an immediate Return to a State of Non-entity, can never be reconciled either to Scripture or Reason.

Punishments are a stronger Sanction to a Law than even Rewards, because the generality of Men are more influenced by the Fear of Pain than by the Hopes of Pleasure. That this is true, every Man's own Heart will be able to inform him. From hence the general Practice of all Ages and Nations: From hence the Rack and Gibbet; from hence the rigid penal Statutes, which make up greatest Part of the civil Constitutions of every State under Heaven. 'Twere strange then if the all-wise Director of all Things should omit this necessary Sanction to a Law, which cannot be violated without a most daring Insult against the Divine Majesty—a most gross and palpable Affront upon the Divine Wisdom and Authority. If it were necessary I might add, that a State of *actual* Punishment

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Punishment was in Consequence of such Considerations the Hell even of the *Heathen* World: Hence that confused Medley of gloomy and fantastical Horrors, taught by their Divines, celebrated by their Poets, and acknowledged by their Philosophers.

To have a Glimpse of Heaven, a Prospect into Immortality, and to be sensible that he must the next Moment assuredly give it up for ever, would undoubtedly create in the Person so situated a most inexpressible Anguish. Even that for the Time it lasted were Hell enough, but such a momentary Hell would bear too unequal a Proportion to the Crimes of some Men ever to satisfy eternal Justice; and in a Word, would fall as far short of the Mark as the most sanguine Oppugners of everlasting Misery can pretend that goes beyond it.

Such a Hell at least were by no Means the Hell of the Holy Scriptures: *The Worm gnaws*, but 'tis too short-lived: The Doom is, *Go ye Wicked*, not into a State of Annihilation, but *into the Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels*;[q] into *outer Darkness, where there shall be Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth*;[r] where the hopeless *Eye* shall be *lift up* in vain, and the parch'd *Tongue* denied the wretched Comfort of *a Drop of Water*.[s] But if, lastly, by a Fire unquenchable,[t] by a *Worm which never dieth*,[u] *a Lake burning with Fire and Brimstone*,[w] *a Torment*, the *Smoak* of which *ascendeth up for ever*,[x] &c.—If by these, I say, and numberless other Passages to the same Effect, equally expressive, we are at last to understand nothing more than a State of absolute Darkness, Silence and Inactivity,

[q] Matth. xxv. 41. [r] Ibid. 30. [s] *See* Luke xvi. 23, 24. [t] Mark ix. 44, &c. [u] Ibid. [w] Apoc. xxi. 8. [x] Ibid. xiv. 11.

Inactivity, undoubtedly the *Holy Ghost* has very improperly expreſs'd himſelf, as this is a Senſe very different from what is uſually convey'd by thoſe Terms, wherever elſe we meet with them. But is not this an Imputation too groſs to be charged upon theſe Declarations, which are generally ſo plain, that a Man may *run* and *read* them. — But in ſhort, if this be the Caſe, there is no Force in Words, nor have we any rational Aſſurance of a future happy Exiſtence, more than of a miſerable one. *Rivers of Pleaſure* are not more expreſſive of *Being*, than *Lakes of Brimſtone*; nor is there leſs Reaſon to call Non-exiſtence a State of Happineſs, becauſe attended with no Inquietude, than of Miſery, becauſe incapable of any Enjoyments.

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Juſt the ſame may be ſaid for the Eternity of that State, as for the real Exiſtence of it. Its Duration is expreſs'd in the ſtrongeſt and moſt ſignificant Terms: 'Tis a Fire which ſhall *never* be quenched, a Worm which *dieth not*; a Torment, the Smoak of which aſcendeth up *for ever and ever*: In a Word, 'tis in this Reſpect all that the Happineſs of the Bleſſed is; they are each of them (αἰώνιος [y]) eternal, perpetual, everlaſting; and muſt ſtand or fall together: If Hell be finite, Heaven ſhakes; if Heaven be infinite, Hell is hopeleſs of a Period. As all Imperfection ſhall vaniſh with the *Faſhion of this World*, all hereafter muſt in its Kind be perfect and compleat: But were it poſſible that the Torments of Hell might receive a Period, the Damn'd themſelves might hope, nay they muſt neceſſarily enjoy a pleaſing Expectation, which would be heighten'd with the growing Minute. But alas! that chearful Sun muſt never dart the ſlighteſt

[y] Matth. xxv. 46.

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ſlighteſt Ray upon thoſe gloomy Regions. Take away the *Worm which dieth not*, and Torment loſes half its Sting; admit a Place for Fear or Anxiety in it, Heaven is no longer Heaven; baniſh Deſpair, Hell ceaſes to be Hell: So that the Doctrine of *everlaſting* Puniſhment is not only founded on expreſs Scripture, but even ſtrongly atteſted to by cool and impartial Reaſon.

There remain yet to be briefly conſider'd the reſpective Natures of theſe two States, which, as far as it is neceſſary we ſhould be acquainted with them, are alſo delineated to us by the holy Writers; and though *Eye* hath never *ſeen*, nor *Ear heard*, though *Heart* hath not conceived the dazzling Excellency of that Glory which is to be the Reward of a well-ſpent Life, the Joys which are to form the *Crown of Righteouſneſs*, yet have we here ſufficient Security, that they are of the moſt exalted and unlimited Nature, free from thoſe ſharp Allays, to which every thing ſublunary is expoſed, and fraught with endleſs Variety, and inexhauſtible Delight. But it may be neceſſary to remind even the *Chriſtian*, that they are withal purely and entirely ſpiritual and intellectual; and to caution him therefore from ſullying, with the wild *Mahometan*, his ſpotleſs Heaven with ſenſual and impure Delights, which are not only greatly unbecoming a Nature ſo exalted as we then expect to be raiſed to, but for which even the Capacity itſelf ſhall be loſt and forgotten. The Body, for whoſe Sake the fond Voluptuary would willingly if poſſible provide a Perpetuity of ſuch Enjoyments, ſhall then have as ill a Reliſh for ſenſual, as in its preſent State it hath for intellectual Pleaſures. Though *ſown in Weakneſs*, it ſhall leave all that *Weakneſs* in the Grave, and be *raiſed in Power*, ſuperior to all its former Imbecillities. It ſhall indeed go down

down into the Duſt a *natural* Body, but it ſhall return from thence a *ſpiritual* Body; and all its Imperfections being done away, it ſhall be thenceforward freed from all Servitude to corrupt and unruly Paſſions, and become in all Reſpects *like to the Angels in Heaven.* As for the Soul, it ſhall be exalted to the utmoſt Perfection in all its Parts and Faculties: Its Capacity ſhall be not only in all Reſpects greatly enlarged, but alſo compleatly filled; the Underſtanding extended even to a Knowledge of the moſt great and perfect of all Beings; the Affections regulated, and the Will reſolved entirely into that of our Creator. ART. XII.

And as Heaven on the one hand ſhall want nothing which may give Happineſs to an intellectual Being, ſo on the other ſhall not Hell be deficient in any thing which may create Torment—Torment in all its various and affrighting Shapes: Within—Horror, Remorſe, Deſpair, and a *Worm which never dieth*; without—*Reproaches, Weeping, Wailing, Gnaſhing of Teeth, a Lake burning with Fire and Brimſtone*, and a *Flame which ſhall never be quenched.* In one of theſe States is that incomprehenſible Thing call'd *Eternity* to be employed, and the Whole of this is intended by the Article before us, under thoſe comprehenſive Words *The Life Everlaſting.*

There remains yet one, and I think but one Particular to be conſider'd, which is, when this Eternity (or rather indeed Infinity) is to commence. Strictly ſpeaking, it is already begun with reſpect to all thoſe whoſe *Noſtrils* have already received the *Breath of Life.* But in the Senſe of the Creed it is not to take place till that Re-union of the Soul and Body, which was the Subject of the preceding Article. For the *Life everlaſting* of this Article is evidently the ſame with the *Life and Immortality*

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mortality of the Gospel. But that could not be the natural Immortality of the Soul, which was demonstrably known and assented to many Centuries before the Time, when the other is expressly said to have been first *brought to Light*. But the great and important Discovery, that the Whole of Man was capable of a perpetual Existence, that *this Corruptible* could *put on Incorruption*, and *this Mortal be endued with Immortality*—this, I say, was reserved for the *Author and Finisher of our Faith*, and cannot justly be ascribed to any other Character. And the *Christian* Symbolum (or Creed) being founded on *Gospel* Truths, this must necessarily be the *Life* of this Article.—Upon a Review of the Whole, we find it to stand thus: I believe that when the Soul and Body shall be united in the Day of the last Judgment, and shall together have received the solemn Sentence either of Approbation or Condemnation, they shall together enter upon that State, which shall by that Sentence be allotted them; the Righteous into Happiness, and the Wicked into Misery: That each of these States shall in the first Place be most perfect in itself; one consisting of the most compleat Felicity, the other of the most exquisite Torments: That they shall each of them also be perpetual: The Joys of the Blessed shall thenceforward receive no Period or Interruption, nor the Torments of the Damn'd know any End, either by the Persons of the Tormented falling into a State of Annihilation, or by a Cessation or Relaxation of the Torments themselves. And thus much is every one supposed to give his Assent to, who in the Words of this Article professes a Belief of *The Life Everlasting*.

FINIS.

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